THE GREAT
DUTY
OF
Self-Resignation
TO THE
DIVINE WILL.

By the late Pious and Learned

JOHN WORTHINGTON, *D.D.*

Luke xxii. 42.
—*Nevertheless not my will but thine be done.*

Rom. vi. 13.
——*But yield your selves unto God.*

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The Preface.

THE following Treatiſe contains the Subſtance of ſeveral Sermons, which were Preached on divers Texts relating to each other, and moſt of them at *Benet Fink* in *London*, where the worthy Author was for ſome time Preacher, till his Church and Pariſh were laid in Aſhes; and they were the *laſt* that were heard from him in that place.

On that Lord's-day whereon the dreadful Fire of *London* brake forth, he was come to inſiſt on the Exemplary *Reſignation* of holy *Job* to the Divine Will under thoſe diſmal Suf-

ferings he was exerciſed with, which is the Argument of the Ninth Chapter of the Second Section of this Diſcourſe. And it is to be believed that he was directed by a very *ſpecial* Providence to ſo highly uſeful and ſeaſonable a Subject, for the preparing his Hearers for that heavy Calamity which was ſo nearly approaching them.

Some of thoſe Sermons I heard much commended about the time they were Preached, and ſince the much lamented Death of the good Doctor, a worthy Friend having found them all tied together, among a confuſed company of Papers, with this Inſcription, *Self-Reſignation*, he delivered them into *my* hands, ſignifying withall that he had for the moſt part peruſed them, to his great ſatisfaction: And I quickly ſaw cauſe to believe that it would be a good work to make them publick.

And

And had it not been for multiplicity of buſineſs, which forced me frequently, and that for a conſiderable time together, to lay it aſide, this Treatiſe might have been completed, and ſeen the light above a year ago.

And now that it is (through the goodneſs of God) at length come abroad, I hope the ſame allowance will be made for it, that uſes to be for Poſthumous Pieces; and alſo that none will expect that the Author ſhould have written with ſuch accuracy for the *Pulpit*, as he would have done for the *Preſs*.

But yet, as it is, I doubt not but all underſtanding and ingenuous Readers will acknowledge it highly worthy a ſerious peruſal; and that it is excellently fitted for the promoting a Chriſtian's proficiency in his Maſter's School.

As for the *Subject* it treats of, *Self-*

Reſignation, there is no Duty more evident: Nothing is more apparently reaſonable, than that we are obliged to give up *our ſelves to God*, to be uſed and acted by him as ſhall ſeem beſt to his unerring Wiſdom. Nor is any thing ſo unnatural as for the Wills of dependent Creatures to oppoſe themſelves to the Will of their great Creator, which is inſeparably conjoyned with, and ever founded upon, the higheſt Reaſon, Righteouſneſs and Goodneſs. There is not ſuch a Prodigy or Monſter in Nature, as he that will not ſuffer that ſame Will to rule *him* that governs the World, and refuſeth to be entirely at *his* diſpoſe, who being the *Original*, muſt needs be the abſolute *Lord* of all things.

This Duty is alſo moſt comprehenſive and of largeſt extent; the whole of that which *the Grace of God that bringeth Salvation teacheth* is reduce-

reduceable to it: And 'tis very obvious that there is nothing either commanded or forbidden for *it ſelf* in our Saviour's Religion, but is a neceſſary and *natural* expreſſion and inſtance of *Self-Reſignation*. I mean there is not any thing we are required in the Goſpel to perform or forbear for its *own ſake*, and not in order to the better enabling us to ſome *other* Duty, and guarding us from ſome *other* Sin, but it is of that nature, that *Self-Reſignation* is, *antecedently* to the Command or Prohibition, inconſiſtent with the not doing what is *ſo* commanded, or the doing what is *ſo* forbidden. And where a Reſigned Temper is, through the Divine Grace, in ſome good meaſure acquired, it will *naturally* draw after it moſt chearful Obedience and willing Submiſſion to the good pleaſure and appointments of our bleſſed Lord: So that we ſhall not complain

plain of *any* of those Precepts he hath given us as harsh or grievous, nor of any affliction he trieth us with as over-severe.

Let me adde, that the entire Resignation of our Wills to the Will of God must needs be a Subject, than which there cannot be any one handled of more weighty importance, in that the restoring Mankind to this excellent Temper was the grand and main Errand upon which God the Father sent his Son into the World: This is as evident as that our Fall (which brought us under the necessity of a Saviour) was no other than the loss of this Temper accompanied with the necessary and immediate consequents thereof. Man's affecting independence on his Maker, his being impatient to be restrained within those limits which his Creator had appointed him, and chusing to gratifie his senses and fond imagi-

imagination without consulting with the Divine Will made known to him by the Dictates of Natural Light and External Revelation, *this* was truly his Loss of Paradise, *this* was his Lapse from the heavenly to the hellish state. And therefore the restoring mankind to their original constitution, the reducing our Wills to a perfect harmony and compliance with the Will of God, was an undertaking of all other the most worthy of his onely begotten Son's manifesting himself in our flesh, and his *doing* and *suffering* what he did in the humane nature.

And as our Author could not have made choice of a more noble or necessary *Subject*, so I presume his *Method* and way of mannaging it will not be thought unworthy of it.

First, he presents us with the most *powerful* Considerations in order to our

our being fully convinced, and affected with a great ſenſe, of our indiſpenſable and eternal Obligation to *Self-Reſignation*, and to the exciting and awakening us to the moſt ſerious endeavours to ſubdue our Wills to the Will of God.

Secondly, he directs us to the moſt effectual *means* for the rendring this Duty as eaſie as is poſſible to our frail and corrupt natures. And under theſe two general Heads, he hath taken occaſion, without digreſſing from his buſineſs, to acquaint his Readers with moſt, if not all, the beſt and moſt important notions and principles, (I mean ſuch as have the moſt apparent tendency to the promoting of true Holineſs) and to rectifie the moſt dangerous and fatal miſtakes, which are ſuch as either directly ſtrike at, or in their Conſequences undermine a good life.

The

The Reader will likewiſe obſerve an excellent and moſt Chriſtian Spirit running through this whole Diſcourſe, and ſee great reaſon to believe that the Author was very much affected with what he hath written; that his *heart* was powerfully touched with the Arguments he purſueth; and that he had not a mere notional but *experimental* knowledge of the Excellency of a Self-denying, *Reſigned* temper; and was acted with a great zeal for the propagation of it, as being truly ſenſible that it is the very *Life* and *Soul* of Chriſtianity.

He appeared to all that knew him to have a vigorous ſenſe of *this* Principle, moſt of his Diſcourſes in the Pulpit were much tinctured with it, and he gave many ſingular proofs of his living under the power and government of it.

If

If the Author's Copiouſneſs of Style, and repeating (according to his uſual manner) the ſame thing ſomewhat often in different expreſſions ſhall offend any, I would deſire them to conſider that this way is not without its advantages both to Hearers and Readers: For by this means the matters diſcourſed are made the more intelligible to the meaner Capacities, and apt to make in *all* ſorts the deeper and more abiding impreſſion. And, however it happens, we find by experience that one manner of expreſſing a thing doth frequently more affect us, than another that's as proper, as ſignificant and as eaſily underſtood.

If any ſhall object againſt the Author's repeating ſome of his Motives to the *ſeeking* among his Directions for the *obtaining* a *Reſigned Temper*, they ought to remember that the ſame Conſiderations may ſerve very properly

perly both thoſe purpoſes in *different* reſpects.

If ſome of the Arguments in the former Section ſhall ſeem in effect and for ſubſtance the *ſame*, this will not be looked upon as a juſt ground of exception by thoſe that ſhall perceive, that they occaſion, however, *diſtinct* Diſcourſes, and thoſe very pertinent and profitable; and 'tis ſufficient if there be but a *modal* difference betwixt heads of diſcourſe.

Now the God of all Grace, without whoſe Bleſſing all our Endeavors prove ineffectual, make this Treatiſe, with all other the pious Labours of his Servants, inſtrumental to the furthering the great End of our Chriſtian Faith: The conforming us more and more to the Divine Will and Likeneſs, the qualifying us by Purity of Heart, and a participation of that Image of God, which conſiſts in Righteouſneſs and

true

true Holineſs, for his ſpecial favour and complacential love in this World, and a glorious Immortality in the complete enjoyment of the ever bleſſed Trinity in the World to come. And (to conclude with that excellent Prayer in our Liturgy) *Prevent us, O Lord, in all our doings with thy moſt gracious favour, and further us with thy continual help, that in all our works begun, continued and ended in thee, we may glorifie thy holy Name, and finally by thy Mercy obtain Everlaſting Life, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord.* Amen.

Edward Fowler.

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Errata.

PAg. 82. lin. 1. for *power* r. *proſper.* p. 233. in the marg. r. עַמְנָה p. 235. l. 13. for *momentary* r. *momentany.*

THE

THE INTRODUCTION.

AMongſt all Divine Truths, none are more frequently, more powerfully, to be preſt and urged, than thoſe that are wholly practical, that refer to Spiritual Obedience, that pertain πρὸς ζωὴν καὶ εὐσέβειαν, *to life and godlineſs*, that tend to the real bettering of Man, and transforming him into the Divine Image; ſuch as are moſt powerful to the ſubduing our *own* Wills, as divided from *God's*, and the bringing them unto a conformity to the Will of God.

But alas! theſe great practical Truths have been too commonly either ſparingly, or but coldly and inſignificantly, not fully, clearly and vigorouſly recommended. The great noiſe and ado in the Chriſtian World hath been about the lighter matters of the Law, *Mint*, *Anniſe* and *Cummin*, *Meats* and *Drinks*, wherein the Kingdom of God doth not conſiſt. The great talk and zeal hath been about things leſs neceſſary and more obſcure and doubtful:

men *doting about queſtions and ſtrifes of words, whereof cometh envy, ſtrife, railings and evil ſurmiſings.* It pleaſeth men to hear of *ſpeculative* Doctrins, and to be entertained with a luſcious Preaching of the Goſpel, made up all of *Promiſes* and theſe wholly unconditional; it gratifies them to hear what is done *without* them rather than what is to be done *within* them, and the neceſſity of ſincere and entire obedience to our Saviours Precepts urged upon them. All would *reign* with Chriſt, but they would not *ſuffer* with him; they would hear only of Chriſts dying for ſin, of his being crucified for them; but to hear of their dying to ſin and their own corrupt will, of their being crucified with him, and ſuffering their wills to be reſigned to the will of the Father as Chriſts was, to hear of making an entire oblation of themſelves to God, *this is a hard ſaying*, few will bear it, 'tis very unpleaſing to fleſh and blood, 'tis too *ſpiritual* a Goſpel for the carnal mind to reliſh. But how unpleaſing ſoever it be, it is not
Gal. i. 10. therefore to be forborn; for *if we ſhould ſeek to pleaſe men, we ſhould not be the ſervants of Chriſt.* If we ſhould gratifie and humour inſincere people in their ſoft and delicate ſelf-choſen Religion, and their willing their own will, we ſhould not be faithful

ful to their ſouls, whoſe grand intereſt and neceſſary concernment it is to know and practiſe this firſt and great Leſſon in the School of Chriſt. Self-Reſignation is a great part of the Doctrin that is *according to godlineſs*. They are the wholſom (or healing) words of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, viz. *He that doth not take up his Croſs, and come after me, cannot be my diſciple:* Nor *is he worthy of me.*

Λόγοι ὑγιαίνοντες. Luke xiv. 27. Mat. x. 38.

This is healing Doctrin that alone can cure the inward Diſtempers of our Souls, and therefore abſolutely neceſſary to be taught and preſt with all authority. It matters not that the carnally minded and delicate Chriſtian doth not reliſh it. We that are the Miniſters of the Goſpel are to imitate careful and prudent Phyſicians, who, when they come to their Patients, do not ask them what they love beſt, and then preſcribe them what is moſt pleaſing to their Palates, though moſt hurtful; but, informing themſelves well of the caſe of the diſeaſed, they appoint what they judge moſt proper for them, though it be no whit grateful or acceptable to them.

But howſoever the reſigning their wills to the will of God be as loathſom Phyſick to the carnal, it is to the truly ſpiritual both meat and drink, as it was to their

great Maſter: It is their conſtant Diet, the ſavoury Meat which their Souls love and live by: They eſteem the fore-mentioned and the like words of their Saviours mouth, *more than their neceſſary food:* to borrow *Job*'s expreſſion, Chap. xxiii. 12.

And this ſo little minded, ſo much neglected Doctrin of *Self-Reſignation* is that which I deſign to treat of, and with all ſeriouſneſs to recommend to thoſe that name the name of Chriſt. For the more diſtinct underſtanding whereof, we muſt know that *Self-Reſignation* doth relate either, Firſt, to the *Commands* of God, particularly ſuch Commands as are difficult to nature, and grievous to fleſh and bloud (for to obey in *leſſer* and more *eaſie* inſtances, is no worthy proof of our *Reſignation*) and thus conſidered, it implieth an entire Obedience to the *Preceptive* Will of God. Or, Secondly it relates to hard *Trials*, great hardſhips and ſufferings, ſuch as God doth allot and appoint *to humble us and to know what is in our hearts:* And thus conſidered it implieth a meek patience and quiet ſubmiſſion to the divine *Diſpoſals* and Will of *Providence*.

But I ſhall not ſpeak to theſe two diſtinctly, but joyn them both together in this Aphoriſm, wherein is comprized the grand

grand Fundamental and Myſtery of *Practical Religion*, viz. *That a Chriſtian is to reſign his Will wholly to the Will of God, to make an entire Oblation of himſelf to him.*

In diſcourſing on which we ſhall *firſt* preſent you with ſeveral weighty Conſiderations that do moſt effectually recommend to us this *Self-Reſignation:* And *ſecondly* ſet down ſuch Helps and Directions as are moſt proper to attain it.

SECT. I.

Conſiderations recommending the Duty of SELF-RESIGNATION, *to our moſt ſerious and diligent Practice.*

CHAP. I.

That it is the Law of our Creation both firſt and ſecond. The Conſideration of God as a ſecond Creator ſhewed, mightily to inforce our Engagement to this Duty upon a four-fold account.

I. *Self-Reſignation* is the Law of our Creation; our neceſſary condition and property, both as we are Creatures, and as New-Creatures; as we are made and as we are renewed after God's Image. It is not a new thing introduced firſt by Chriſt, 'tis not an Inſtitution peculiar to the times of the Goſpel, ſo that for almoſt four thouſand years Man was not obliged to it; but

it is our unchangable property arising from our dependence upon God and relation to him. There is a Law written within us that requires this, nor can any thing free us from our Obligation hereunto. We were made by God for himself, and therefore must needs be under an eternal Obligation to yield universal Obedience to him. This is *an old Commandment which man had from the beginning*, rooted in and interwoven with his very Being, all the Duties enjoined therein are Branches of the everlasting Righteousness, and are of an eternal and unchangable nature.

Psal. ciii. 20, 21.

'Tis the Character of *Angels*, that *they do his Commandments, hearkening to the voice of his word*, and *that they do his will:* And the *Self-Resignation* of Angels, their doing God's Will in *Heaven*, is the model of Mens *Resignation* and Obedience on *Earth*; for our Saviour hath taught us thus to pray, *Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.* Angels and Men are under the same Moral Obligation of Religion, the same Law for substance concerns both. Love is the sum of the whole Law, and *Angels* are to love God with all their might, as well as *Men*, and one Angel is to love another as himself.

Religion

Religion obligeth every rational and understanding Creature, and the Quinteſſence of Religion is *Reſignation*; and therefore it is impoſſible this could ever have not been, or ſhould ever for the future ceaſe to be our Duty. *Omnia ſunt in manu Cœli, excepto timore Cœli*, was an antient Maxim of the Hebrew Doctors, implying that God himſelf cannot abſolve and free men from the religious fear and obſervance of himſelf, and a moſt obedient regard to his holy Will.

What the Apoſtle ſaith of *Love*, that it is an *old* and yet a *new* Commandment, is true alſo of this high and holy Commandment of *Self-Reſignation*. It is a *new* Commandment; not as if it were firſt brought in by Chriſt, as was ſaid, for men were never free to will their own wills, to walk in the ways of their own hearts; but it is new, as the Commandment of *Love* is new, in that it was enlivened and inforced anew by Chriſt, had its power and virtue renewed and increaſed, and the engagement to it heightned both by the *Doctrin* and *Example* of our Saviour: Both tending to the advancement of *Self-Reſignation* in a way beyond any Doctrin or Example of Life that ever appeared before or ſince in the world. And therefore it is alſo the Law of the *new Creation*, and by virtue thereof its Obligation

ligation is now doubled. The Conſideration of God as our ſecond Creator mightily inforceth our engagement to this Duty. For,

1. The relation of the *New-Creature* is *more noble and honourable.* In the ſecond Creation the Image of God is repaired in the ſoul, and man that was a diſfigured and diſordered thing, by reaſon of his Apoſtaſie and fall from God, is reſtored now to that better and more excellent ſtate. As he is a New-Creature, he partakes of the Spirit, and is heavenly and ſpiritual: Which is far more than having a natural Being, by which (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks) *he is of the earth earthy.*

Ab eo tempore conſemur, ex quo in Chriſto renaſcimur. S. *Jerom* in his Epitaph on *Nepotianus.*

1 Cor. xv.

2. It is alſo a *ſweeter* relation; there is a moſt dear Love, to be admired rather than to be expreſs'd, manifeſted herein. 1 John iii. 1. *Behold what manner of love the Father hath beſtowed upon us, that we ſhould be called the Sons of God. Abba Father* comes more freely from the lips and heart of the New-Creature. Such may draw near to God with a filial freedom, and humble boldneſs.

Gal. iv. 6.

3. Beſides it is a more *advantageous* relation: For *if children* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *then heirs, heirs of God and joint-heirs with Chriſt.* And the Inheritance they are heirs to,

Rom. viii. 17.

to, is *uncorruptible and undefiled*, *reserved in the heavens for them*; such as *eye hath not seen, nor ear heard*, and the glory and advantages of which no heart can conceive. Of which *according to the abundant grace of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, they are begotten again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.* 1 Pet. i. 3.

4. This new Creation *impowers, capacitates* and *enables us* for this Duty. These things might be largely insisted upon; but thus much is briefly intimated, that the Obligation to *Self-Resignation* may appear more from the notion of a *New-Creature*, than from that of a *Creature*. And to this purpose is that of the Apostle, *Eph.* ii. 10. *We are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works*, created unto intire obedience to the Will of God, the Foundation and also the Sum and Abridgment whereof is *Self-Resignation*.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

That Self-Reſignation is that which doth eminently difference a good man from the Devil and the wicked: And that mere external Performances do not diſtinguiſh between the one and the other.

II. *Self-Reſignation* is that which doth eminently difference a good man from the Devil and the wicked. The Angels that would not continue in *Reſignation*, that would have another will of their own, that rended their wills from the will of God, they are the evil and miſerable Angels; and ſtill they are impetuouſly acted by a boiſterous *Self-Will*, and are impatient of having it checked. * *Belial* is the Devils name, and that word ſignifies *without Yoke*; and the Children of *Belial* are for a boundleſs lawleſs liberty, *they ſet themſelves againſt the Lord and his Chriſt, ſaying, Let us break their bands aſunder and caſt away their cords from us. They altogether break the yoke and burſt the bonds*, are impatient of reſtraint.

* *Quaſi* בלי עול *abſq; jugo,* ἀνομ☉.

Pſal. ii. 3.

Jer. v. 5.

Wicked men in whoſe hearts the Apoſtate Spirit worketh, are υἱοι τ ἀπειθείας, *the*

the children of diſobedience: they are not for intire ſubjection to the Divine Will, though wiſe, good, ſure and perfect; but addicted to their own will, which is childiſh, vain, perverſe and boiſterous; and all for gratifying their **many fooliſh and hurtful deſires and longings.* They are all for *walking after the imagination and ſtubbornneſs of their own hearts* (a phraſe often uſed in the Propheſie of *Jeremiah*) and for †*fulfilling the wills of the fleſh and of the mind.* Whereas the children of God are τέκνα ὑπακοῆς, *children of obedience,* 1 Pet. i. 14. *not conformed to their former luſts, but to the will of God,* as it was ſaid of *David,* Acts xiii. 22,36. Eph. ii. 2; * Ἐπιθυμίας πολλὰς ἀνοήτους καὶ βλαβερὰς. 1 Tim. vi. 9. † Θελήματα. Eph. ii. 3.

And here it is fit to advertiſe and admoniſh Chriſtians, that it is a piece of Myſtery-Wickedneſs, a policy of Satan in all ages, to ſet up and magnifie ſome pieces of Outward Religion, and put ſuch a value upon them, as from them to denominate men Good and Religious: and ſo men are reputed *Saints* and the *Children of God* by ſuch and ſuch *Opinions* and *Notions,* ſuch *Expreſſions,* ſuch *Obſervances,* ſuch things as may be performed by very bad men. So that on theſe different Forms are founded different Parties and Sects, and each magnifies its own mode; and thereupon men

men are tempted and invited to associate and link themselves with one or other, because hereby they shall be reputed *Religious*, and apologized for by those of that rank and way, and all others shall be unsainted and decried. But in the mean while the *main* thing is little minded, that which doth intrinsecally and eminently difference the good from the wicked, and that is *Self-Resignation*; that which our Saviour makes the essential Character of a true Christian, *Self-Denial.*

Now this Doctrin of denying and *resigning* our selves, the Doctrin of the *inward Cross*, of being dead to self-desires and self-interests is very unacceptable and grievous to the Pharisaical and formal Christians; they would fain live to themselves, please themselves, *being lovers of their own selves, covetous, proud, incontinent, fierce, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God*; as the Apostle speaks of some, who hereby denied the *Power* of Godliness, whereof yet they had a *Form.*

Now it is a good service done to Religion to endeavour both by Life and Doctrin, to rescue it from these abuses, from being thought to consist in such outward shews, and to place the Kingdom of God where it should be. It is for the interest

of

of the *pure and undefiled Religion*, and for the advancement of *real Holineſs*, to leſſen the credit of ſuch appearances, *viz.* ſuch an *habit*, *tone*, *form of words*, mere *Outward* performances: to leſſen the repute of any ſort of *Mock-Holineſs*, a mere outward Profeſſion and Obſervance of only the externals of Religion, be they ſuch as are commanded and appointed by God, or be they mere arbitrary and voluntary tasks, which have a *ſhew* of Wiſdom and Holineſs, but *indeed* are a Holineſs of their own framing, and a ſelf-choſen Righteouſneſs. Gal. 1. ult

But yet, this is not ſpoken to leſſen the repute of what is external, with a deſign to make men regardleſs thereof, but only to awaken them from *reſting* in theſe externals, to the minding of a greater ſtrictneſs and holineſs, *a righteouſneſs which exceeds the righteouſneſs of the Scribes and Phariſees*; who were men that were very obſervant of a many of the Outward parts of Religion, and were ſtrict as to ſeveral things that did not croſs and prejudice their carnal intereſts; but yet notoriouſly looſe as to what was moſt ſtrictly and mainly required by God. And therefore our Saviour in the ſixth of *Matthew*, required his Diſciples to beware of ſtrengthning that *Babel*, that falſe imaginary Holineſs of the *Pha-*

Phariſees, who by their ſpecious appearances of *Auſterity* and the like, grew into a great reputation among the people, as if there were much of Religion in them.

Among the Externals of Religion, ſome are of God's own requiring, and ſuitable to our ſtate and condition here; as, *Praying, reading, preaching, hearing the word, diſcourſing of it*, &c. now as for theſe (not to mention ſuch as men do voluntarily impoſe upon themſelves) we are not to value men as religious by any thing in the uſe of them, which is common to the regenerate and unregenerate, and may be performed and attained to by the *Hypocrite* or *formal* Chriſtian, who may make a *fair ſhew in the fleſh* and outward part of Religion, and yet be unacquainted with the *ſpirit and power* of it.

It is the doing theſe things from a *reſigned* heart, ſo to *pray* as in praying to have an humble ſubmiſſion to the Will of God, ſo to *read*, ſo to *preach*, ſo to *hear*, as to be willing to be formed into all that truth, *the good and acceptable will* of God, this is all in all; this is that which doth diſtinguiſh the *formal* and the *real* Chriſtian. Others can perform all that is outward in Religion, and in ſuch a way as to have the praiſe of men, but to deny our ſelves, to reſign our wills entirely to the *Divine Will*, this is proper and peculiar to the inward and *ſincere Chriſtian*. CHAP.

CHAP. III.

That Self-Reſignation is the moſt acceptable way of glorifying God, and that he is honoured by no performances ſeparated from this.

III. SElf-*Reſignation* and a Conformity to the Divine Will is the moſt excellent, the trueſt and moſt acceptable way of glorifying God, and doing honour to him. The greateſt honour and reſpect we can expreſs to an excellent and worthy perſon is to endeavour to be as *like* him as may be, to imitate him in whatſoever accompliſhment commends and repreſents him juſtly exemplary.

And the moſt excellent way of honouring God is to endeavour to be transformed into his likeneſs, to have our will the ſame with his, to will as he wills.

Indeed the mere outward Chriſtian thinks that he doth God great honour and ſervice, when he gives him the fruit of his lips in goodly expreſſions and ſpecious Praiſes; when he gives him the fruit of a bodily Worſhip in multiplying external devotions and religious obſervances: here-

by he thinks he doth highly pleaſe God, and oblige him to him, as if God were ſuch an one as himſelf, and were apt to be taken with ſuch words and ſhews, and did ſeek and paſſionately thirſt after ſuch praiſes and reſpects.

But thus to judge of God and deal with him, is really to diſhonour him, as much as thou pretendeſt by this means to honour him: it is plainly called in Scripture a *flattering God*, Pſal.lxxviii.36. *They remembred God their Rock, and the high God their Redeemer, nevertheleſs they did flatter him with their mouth, and they lied unto him with their tongues.* It was a good Maxim of the *Pythagoreans*, *Thou ſhalt then in the moſt excellent and becoming way glorifie and honour God, when in thy mind, thine inward man, thou art like to God:* When thou art affected as God is affected, when thou willeſt as he wills, art willing to have that deſtroyed in thee which is contrary to the Divine Nature.

Τιμήσεις δὲ Θεὸν ἄριστα ἐὰν πρὸς Θεῷ ἡ διάνοια ὁμοιώσης.

That which the *Chaldee Paraphraſt* doth gloſs on thoſe words in *Pſal.*l. ult. *whoſo offereth praiſe glorifieth me*, is very pertinent, viz. *whoſo ſubdues and deſtroys* יְצִירָא בִישָׁא *the principle of inordinate affection in him, it ſhall be accounted to him as* קׇרְבָּן תּוֹדְתָא *a ſacrifice of praiſe.* The mortifying of earthly

ly members, the ſlaying undue deſires, corrupt intereſts, and uncurbed affections is more, infinitely more, pleaſing than all thoſe coſtly and pompous Services under the Law; than the utmoſt that the Lip-ſervice and Tongue-devotion can make ſhew of.

That great bulk of Rites and Ceremonies, thoſe burthenſome Services under the Law, thoſe multitudes of Sacrifices of Bulls, Goats, Lambs, *&c.* they did not, they could not avail, were but mean inconſiderable things and vain coſt, without the inward Sacrifice of an heart ſweetly, ſincerely, kindly and ingenuouſly affected towards God. This, *this* heart, *ſuch* a temper of Spirit did * *pleaſe the Lord, better than a bullock that hath horns and hoofs.* * *Behold to obey is better than Sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of Rams*, the beſt of the Sacrifice.

* Pſal. lxix. 31.

* 1 Sam. xv. 22.

Will the Lord be pleaſed with thouſands of Rams, and ten thouſands of rivers of oyl? with multitudes of outward Services and bodily Auſterities, with long Faſtings or Prayings, or Propheſyings in his Name, with large Diſcourſes, glorious Expreſſions, vehement Diſputings, *or the like?* theſe he ſhall have, any thing ſhall be given rather than the *Sin of the Soul*, the

corrupt will ſhould be deſtroyed. But it is the walking with God in Humility and *Reſignation*, which is that good thing *which God hath ſhewed thee, O man, and which the Lord thy God requireth of thee.*

Micah vi. 6, 7, 8.

Prov. xxi. 27. *The Sacrifice of the wicked*, thoſe whoſe wills are oppoſite to the Will of God, *is an abomination unto the Lord.*

And now under the Goſpel-ſtate, wherein thoſe Legal and Carnal Ordinances are ceaſed, our more ſeemingly *Spiritual* Exerciſes of Religion, our *Prayings*, our *Faſtings*, our *ſaying Lord, Lord*, and *naming the name of Chriſt*, and great Profeſſion of Chriſtianity, and all other religious outward obſervances are but fruitleſs empty things, of no account with God, utterly unavailable, except there be at the bottom of all a *Reſigned heart.*

As St. *James* ſaith, *If any man ſeemeth to be religious and bridleth not his tongue*, ſo is it moſt true, If any man ſeemeth to be religious and bridleth not his *Will*, which is more hard, *that mans Religion is vain.*

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

That Self-Reſignation is the way to light even in the greateſt difficulties and perplexities: whether they be in reference to our duty, or in reference to our condition and ſtate.

IV. FOurthly, *Self-Reſignation* is the way to light, and that in the greateſt difficulties and darkeſt perplexities. There is a kind of *Divine Oracle* within the *Self-reſigning* Soul which ſpeaks clearly and plainly, not darkly and ambiguouſly, as that Oracle in *Greece*. There is a Spiritual Prieſthood which hath the *Urim* and *Thummim* (not *upon* the breaſt as *Aaron* had, but) *within* the breaſt: *Light* and *Integrity* go together. *The ſecret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will ſhew them his Covenant:* or, as it is better in the Margent, *and his Covenant to make them know it.* That is, it is part of God's gracious Covenant, not to conceal from them, but to make them know his Will. That which concerns them to know and practiſe God will not hide from the ſincerely obedient. Pſal. xxv. 14.

God makes ſuch to *know Wiſdom in the*
Pſal. li. 6. *hidden part*, or in *the hidden man of the heart*, to uſe St. *Peter's* phraſe.

That may ſafely be underſtood, and is moſt true of the *Self-reſigning* Soul, which the Son of *Syrach* doth affirm, *Chap.* 37. 13. *Let the counſel of thine own heart ſtand, for there is no man more faithfull unto thee then it: for a mans mind is ſometime wont to tell him more than ſeven watchmen that ſit above in an high tower.*

But to ſpeak more particularly. Where this inward Principle of *Self-Reſignation* is, there are the feweſt doubts and perplexities; or in caſe of ſuch doubts, there are the ſpeedieſt and ſureſt reſolutions.

Now the Doubts and Sollicitudes, that perplex and diſquiet Chriſtians, may be chiefly ranked under theſe two heads: They are either about their *Duty*, or about their *State*.

And in both, *Self-Reſignation* is the way to Light, and affords the greateſt advantages of knowing aright.

1. *Be the doubts and perplexities about our* Duty, *what we are to* do: The *Self-reſigning* Soul is in the beſt diſpoſition to give a right judgement in this caſe, is the beſt prepared to receive Divine Light, and the guidance of God's Counſel.

1. *This*

1. *This Soul is best prepared to receive Divine Light.* Such a Soul is wholly made for Obedience and quiet Submission to the Will of God: it is brought up at the feet of Christ, sits there (with *Mary*) in the posture and Spirit, and all the becoming qualities of a willing and obedient Disciple; and the Teacher of Souls will not neglect to shew unto such the path of life. God will write his Law in the humble and obedient heart; the Laws and Rules of Life and Obedience shall be written within it by the Spirit of the Living God. Those Eternal Characters of Goodness and Righteousness which are in the mind of God are copied out and transcribed in the Soul of a *Resigned* Christian. *We have the mind of Christ*, saith the Apostle, 1 *Cor.* 2. *ult. The meek shall he guide in judgment, the meek shall he teach his way*, Psal. 25. 9. And those Letters are not dead Letters, like those written with Ink on Paper; but they are living Characters, as they are in God, and writ on living tables. They are *the Law of the Spirit of Life*, an inward living Principle in such Souls. Rom. viij. 2.

Again, the *Self-resigning* Soul is still and silent before the Lord: Lusts and corrupt Interests are here quelled and silenced, which make a continuall noise and cla-

mour in the unregenerate, and *unreſigned* by their importunate Sollicitations, and fill them with din and tumult; and therefore ſuch a Soul is better prepared to hear God coming to it in the *ſtill ſmall voice*, as once he did to *Elias*, 1 Kings 19.

Thoſe ſoft and gentle Whiſpers of the Spirit, *Venæ Divini murmuris*, as *Prudentius* calls them, thoſe inward manifeſtations of himſelf are beſt diſcerned and attended to in this ſolemn ſilence. When the Wind is high, and beats upon the windows and doors of the houſe, it is hard to hear what is ſaid within. All tumultuous and boiſterous paſſions muſt be calmed, and the Soul be in a ſtate of due ſtillneſs and tranquility to hear what God ſpeaks to it. And when this is the language of our hearts, (as it was of *Samuel*) *Speak Lord, for thy ſervant heareth*, then it is that we hear a voice behind us ſaying, *this is the way, walk in it.* And thus ſhall *the path of the righteous be as the ſhining light, that ſhineth more and more unto the perfect day*, Prov. 4. 18.

2, The *Self-reſigning Soul is in the beſt diſpoſition to give a right judgment, and to diſcern the Will of God.* When men are *unreſigned*, unwilling to be wholly God's, and have ſome deſign and intereſt to ſerve contrary to the deſign of Chriſt, and Righteouſneſs,

ouſneſs, and are paſſionately and eagerly carried out to it, it is no wonder if they erre in their hearts, and know not the way of God, the way wherein he hath declared he will have them to walk: For they are eaſily brought to fancy that to be right which they ſtrongly *will*, and to judge things to be *thus* from their impetuous *willing* them to be thus. And it is juſt with God to give them up to an injudicious and undiſcerning mind, ſo that things appear to them, not as they are, but as they would have them to appear; not according to their own inward form and nature, but according to the luſts of their own heart. Luſts and Paſſions caſt ſuch a miſt before our minds, that we cannot ſee our way, nor well diſcern between good and evil.

It is eaſie to obſerve, that the ſame men when they are free from Temptations, and from under the power of Paſſions, clearly ſee many things to be evil, and condemn them, which at other times they will not be convinc'd are ſo, but pronounce the quite contrary concerning them. Therefore the *Self-reſigning* Chriſtian, having that ſubdued in him that would tempt him to judge amiſs, is in the ready way to the cleareſt diſcerning the Will of God. What is ſaid of Chriſt is, according to his meaſure,

Isa. xi. 3. ſure, true of a faithfull Chriſtian, *he is of a quick underſtanding in the fear of the Lord*; of a quick *ſcent* or *ſmell*, as the Hebr. רֵיחַ doth import, of a more *ſagacious* ſpirit; he hath a more exact κριτήριον, *his ſenſes are ſpi-*
Heb. v. ult. *ritually exerciſed to diſcern both good and evil.*

Such as *are not conformed to this world, but transformed* by the renewing of their minds, *ſhall prove and diſcern what is that good, acceptable and perfect Will of God*, Rom. xii. 2.

Unpurified reaſon and underſtanding is far from being a ſure and ſafe guide and director about the τὸ δέον, *what ought to be done*; for it looks at what is *profitable* rather than at what is *honeſt*. Though it may be quick enough to diſcern in matters meerly *ſpeculative* and *notional*, yet it is very apt to miſcarry in *Morals* and matters of
Pſal. cxi. ult. *Practice*. But *a good underſtanding have all they that do his Commandments*; a better light ſhines into holy and purged hearts, *and in this light they ſee light*, and the *day-ſtar is riſen in their hearts*.

This is the Priviledge of the *Self-reſigning* Soul, that knows no Will of its own divided from the Will of God, and would not will any thing, but what he doth will;
Prov. ij. 5. ſuch a Soul ſhall *underſtand the fear of the Lord*,

Lord, and hath great and frequent occaſions of ſaying with *David*, *I will bleſs the Lord who hath given me counſel.* Pſal. xvi. 7.

2. *Be the doubts about our* Condition and State, *what it is to God-ward, and in reference to Eternity:* as S. *James* ſpeaks, *Whence come Wars and fightings?* I may adde, Whence come thoſe fears, anxieties and uncertainties, that are to be obſerved in many about the ſtate of their Souls, thoſe fears that have *torment* in them, *come they not from hence, even from the luſts that war in their members?* One luſt often wars againſt another, *ſcelera diſſident*; but all war againſt the Soul. Ch. iv. 1.

Are not moſt of thoſe tormenting fears and troubles in Chriſtians to be reſolved into the want of an entire *Self-Reſignation* as the proper and true ground? Men will not come off throughly to this, they would be indulged in ſome thing or other, and yet would be at peace and reſt; they would be cured of their diſtemper, and yet are unwilling to have the root of it taken away. Conſider therefore, is there not ſomething of *Self-will* that works and is too powerfull within thee? Wouldeſt thou not be *unreſigned*, and pleaſe thy ſelf in this or that thing? doſt thou not ſay with *Naaman* the *Syrian*, *the Lord pardon thy ſervant in this thing?*

thing? and as *Lot* in another caſe, *is it not a little one?* If this be ſo, God, who ſeeth the heart, ſeeth all this, and he will not be mocked, nor be bribed to give thee peace in thy making a great ſhew of being ſubdued and *reſigned* in other things.

But if by the power of God's Grace our Wills be intirely ſubjected to the Divine Will, we cannot have the leaſt reaſon upon any account whatſoever to torment our ſelves with anxious thoughtfulneſs about our ſtate; we may be ſure that the *outward* Hell ſhall not be our portion if we are delivered from the Hell *within*; and that we cannot miſs of the Heaven *above*, while we have a Heaven *within* us, and are put into a fit diſpoſition for it by a free *Reſignation* to the Will of God. They to whom the doing God's Will is connaturall, and their meat and drink *have eternal life*, as in the Epiſtles of St. *John* the phraſe is more than once; they in a lower degree live the life of Souls in Glory, are affected as they are, and have the diſpoſition and temper of Heaven.

Indeed it is as impoſſible for Souls, whoſe ſincere care it is to purifie themſelves as God is pure, and onely to will as he wills, to be in *Hell*, as it is for impure, ſelf-willed and diſobedient Souls to be

be in *Heaven:* 'Tis as impoſſible for *Love, Peace, Long-ſuffering, Gentleneſs, Goodneſs, Faith, Meekneſs, Temperance*, and the like fruits of the Spirit, to be in *Hell*, as it is for *Uncleanneſs, Laſciviouſneſs, Hatred, Strife, Wrath, Envyings, Cruelty, Unrighteouſneſs*, and the like works of the Fleſh, to grow in *Heaven.* That Soul cannot be miſerable, and is uncapable of the Helliſh ſtate which is intirely *reſigned*; for ſuch a Soul *dwelleth in love*, and therefore *in God*, *and God in him:* Nor can the infinitely good God abandon and caſt off any Soul that cleaveth to him with full purpoſe of heart, and preferreth his Will above her chief Joy. Thirſtings and holy breathings after the enjoyment of God, God-like diſpoſitions, and a frame of heart agreeable to the heart of God, cannot fail to be united to him their Original. 1 Joh. iv. 16.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

That Self-Reſignation is the way to reſt and peace: That thoſe that have attained thereunto find ſatisfaction and pleaſure both in doing, and ſuffering, the Will of God: That it procures outward as well as inward peace; and that Self-willedneſs is that which puts the World into Confuſion.

V. *Self-Reſignation* is the way to true *Peace*, *Reſt* and *Joy*; *Joy* unſpeakable, as St. *Peter* calls it; *Peace which paſſeth all underſtanding*, as St. *Paul*. By the way obſerve, that neither words nor thoughts can reach Spiritual Excellencies, this is their ſole priviledge that they can never be over-valued, over-praiſed. Other things we may eaſily ſpeak too highly of, but we can never invent too magnificent expreſſions concerning theſe; we cannot raiſe mens expectations too high concerning them; they will ever prove better then they are reported to be. It will be ſaid by the Soul that comes to know theſe things by experience, as it was by the Queen of *Sheba*, *Behold half was not told me.*

This

This *Self-Reſignation*, I ſay, it is the way to an holy reſt, to the *Sabbatum cordis*, the Sabbath of the heart, as St. *Auſtin* calls it. If thou wilt enjoy the true reſt, and keep the inward Sabbath, *thou muſt not do thine own ways, nor ſpeak thine own words, nor find thine own pleaſure*; to borrow thoſe words in *Iſaiah* lviij. Thou muſt *ceaſe from thine own works*; as the phraſe is *Hebr.* iv. 10. All deſire *reſt*, *peace*, and *pleaſure*, but no where ſhall we find it, but in *yielding our ſelves to God*; and that it is to be found in this way, our Saviour hath told his Diſciples, *Mat.* xi. 29. *Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, and ye ſhall find reſt to your Souls.*

In taking Chriſt's Yoke upon us, in bearing his burden, in a ſincere, free and entire obedience to his Laws, in learning of him who was meek and lowly in heart a pliable and obedient frame and temper of ſpirit, we ſhall undoubtedly find the ſweeteſt eaſe and tranquility of mind.

As the Soul groweth in *Reſignation*, it returns more to its reſt, it comes to be more as it would be by being more reſtored towards its original conſtitution, its firſt ſtate. Man was made after God's Image, and while his Will was the ſame with the Divine Will, he dwelt in peace and joy: But

But when he would needs have a Will of his own divided from the Will of God, in falling from *Reſignation*, he fell alſo from peace and reſt, into trouble, fears, ſhame and confuſion.

The *Reſigned* Soul enjoys Religion in all the Sweetneſſes and Priviledges of it, it is prepard *to taſte and ſee how good the Lord is*; and the more a man is conformed to the Will of God, and grows in Obedience, the more he enjoys the *peaceable fruits of Righteouſneſs*. *To him that overcometh* (that overcometh his own Will, thoſe Luſts that war againſt his Soul) *ſhall be given the hidden manna, the white ſtone with a new name in it, known by him onely that receiveth it*; *and a ſtranger intermeddleth not with his joy*. Such an one hath meat which the world knows not of, and is fed with the food of Angels.

Rev. ii. 17.

Prov. xiv. 10.

Thoſe which have the Holy Spirit for their Guide, ſhall undoubtedly have him for their Comforter. *The work of righteouſneſs ſhall be peace, and the effect of righteouſneſs quietneſs and aſſurance for ever*, Iſ. xxxij. 17.

A man can have no peace that lodgeth and cheriſheth his deadly Enemy in his boſom; it cannot be well with him in whom *Selfneſs*, the morbifick Matter, and root of all Diſtempers, abounds. Self-deſires and

Luſts

Luſts are the diſeaſes of the Soul, they are the corrupt humours that diſturb the inward man; and till theſe be purged out there can be no health, no ſoundneſs, no joy, no reſt. Inordinate Self-love breeds perpetual tumults and diſorders in our breaſts; for having many appetites to be ſatisfied, ſo long as any of them are croſt or not fully pleaſed, (as they can never be) they muſt neceſſarily be very troubleſome; but a ſweet Calm and compoſure of Soul enters in with *Self-Reſignation*; and it muſt needs ſo do, as it removes the cauſe of trouble and diſquiet.

There is indeed pain in the firſt tearing off our Wills from thoſe things they cleaved and ſtuck faſt to: As it is ſaid of the Milch-kine that drew the Ark, their Calves being ſhut up, they went lowing all the way that they went to *Beth-ſhemeſh*, ſo it is with Souls in their paſſage to *Reſignation*, they then parting with what was dear to them, fondly beloved, and eagerly purſued by them, with that which was their life and nature. But they are no ſooner arrived at this ſtate, but the bitterneſs of death is paſt, the bitterneſs of the death of the Old corrupt man, the hour of travel is over, and they remember no more the anguiſh, for joy that the New man created

after the Image of God is born within them. They have now broken through the difficulties in the way, are got out of the Wilderneſs over *Jordan*, and their feet are on the holy Land, *the Land of righteouſneſs and reſt*. The ways of Religion are not, as before, grievous, but paths of peace and pleaſantneſs, flowry and ſweet, roſie and ſoft ways.

Religion is now become their temper, conſtitution and life, and ſin is grievous, ſtrange, and hard to them. 'Tis not ſo troubleſome to them to be patient as to be paſſionate, to forgive as to revenge; Humility is more eaſie to them than Pride, Sobriety than Intemperance, Chaſtity and Purity are more ſweet than Luſt and Senſuality; and the like may be ſaid of the other Graces and Vertues. It is no longer well with them than while they are true to *Reſignation*; when at any time they fail here they are ſenſible they take great hurt, they find themſelves immediately ill at eaſe. To the Self-reſigning Soul Chriſt's Commandments are ſo far from being grievous, that the inward voice of ſuch a Soul is, *I delight to do thy Will, O my God*; the Divine Will is its juſt ſatisfaction, its full content, joy and pleaſure.

And

And as the *jugum legis*, the yoke of Chriſt's Law, ſo the *jugum crucis*, the yoke of his Croſs, is not grievous to the *Self-reſigned*. He ſaith, with his Saviour, *the Cup which my Father giveth me to drink ſhall I not drink it?* Let God feed him with bitterneſs and wormwood, yet his meditation of him is ſweet: his ſpirit is not imbittered againſt the Divine Providence, he is ſtill and ſilent before the Lord: He poſſeſſeth his Soul with patience, and often alſo with *joyfulneſs*.

It is ſweet and pleaſant to a Chriſtian to find himſelf willing to be without that which he deſired, and to ſuffer that which he was moſt averſe to, and goes moſt againſt the hair, when after his requeſts made known to God by Prayer and Supplication, and making known his troubles and difficulties to others with deſire of their help, and other due means uſed, it appears to be the Will of God that he ſhould have ſuch trialls, and continue in ſuch circumſtances. How ſweet is ſuch a temper of Patience to the Soul! 'tis far ſweeter than the obtaining and enjoying of that we deſire.

But as for the Unreſigned, his impatience and *Self-willedneſs* makes his Cup more bitter, and his Croſs whatever it is, far

heavier than it is in it ſelf. To ſuch an one even the Graſhopper is a burden, and a light affliction intolerable. He is ſick for this or that, as *Ahab* was for *Naboth*'s Vineyard, and will not be ſatisfied without it; he is ſowred with diſcontent, and his ſpirit is embittered againſt Providence. He would be carried through the world in a *Sedan*, nor is he able to bear being jogged or diſturbed in the way; ſo diſtempered, crazy and rotten is he.

I may in the cloſe of this adde, that *Self-Reſignation* is the way to peace among *men*, and that it is ſtiff *Self-willedneſs* which puts the world into Confuſions, and makes it ſo uncomfortable, ſo unhabitable a place. Men that are paſſionately carried out to pleaſe themſelves, are neither *themſelves* at reſt, nor will they ſuffer *others* ſo to be. Theſe create differences, heighten animoſities, blow the coals of ſtrife, are ready to ſet on fire *the courſe of nature*, or the wheel of affairs; and from the abounding of ſuch comes complaining and crying in our Streets. From this *Self-will* it is that we cannot ſit down quietly under our own Vine, and our own Fig-tree: and from hence it is that the World is become a great *Akeldama*, a Field of Bloud, and a Vale of Tears.

Τροχὸν τῆς γενέσεως. James iii. 6.

Thoſe

Thoſe that deſpiſe Government, and ſpeak evil of Dignities are ſuch as are preſumptuous and *ſelf-willed*, 2 Pet. 2. 10.

They that make the times perillous are ſuch as in the firſt place are called φιλαυτοι *Lovers of their own ſelves*, 2 Tim. 3. 1.

CHAP. VI.

That Self-Reſignation is the way to true Liberty and Freedom of Spirit; and the contrary to perfect Slavery and Thraldome.

VI. *Self-Reſignation* is the way to true liberty and freedom of ſpirit; which confirms the former. That which ſome call *freedom* and *liberty*, namely, *to walk in the ways of their own heart, and in the ſight of their eyes*, is in truth ſtraitneſs, bondage, and perfect ſlavery. The Apoſtle *Peter* ſaith, that *of whom a man is overcome, of the ſame is he brought in bondage*. But he that lives to the pleaſing his own will is overcome of Pride, Envy, Covetouſneſs, unruly Paſſions, fleſhly or ſpiritual Luſts, and therefore is in bondage to them. Wicked men are deſcribed as *ſerving divers luſts and pleaſures*; not one, but many Lords, and theſe ſuch as to be under the power of Titus iii. 3.

whom is a moſt ignominious and ſhamefull bondage. *But if the Son make us free we ſhall be free indeed*, free with a true and excellent freedom. Now he makes men free by delivering them from their *Self-will*: By bringing them to will as his Father and he willeth: By uniting their wills with thoſe things that are intrinſecally, immutably and indiſpenſably holy; things which are in their own nature good: By enabling them to act conformably to the Idea of everlaſting and unchangable righteouſneſs and goodneſs. But thoſe that would have nothing unchangably good or evil to *them*, that would live as they liſt in giving indulgence to the fleſh, and fulfilling it in the luſts thereof, they affect ſuch a kind of *freedom* as God himſelf hath not; and therefore that which is utterly unworthy of ſo excellent a name, and is indeed the vileſt and moſt intolerable ſlavery.

The Commands of Sin are moſt tyrannical and unreaſonable; never was poor Iſraelite ſo abuſed by *Egyptian* Task-maſters, as the Soul of man is by ſenſual Luſts; they command impetuouſly and cruelly, and one or other of them is continually putting upon ſuch offices and employments as are no leſs contrary to freedom than to the excellency and dignity of our nature. To

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be acted by hot and eager Ambition, or greedy and unsatiable Covetousness, or a vehement thirst after bodily Pleasures, what a miserable bondage and servitude must it needs be to the free and heaven-born Spirit of man.

But there is no such liberty as to be free to good, and enlarged to spiritual Obedience. He that is so hath an Empire within him, he is in his own power, he hath victory over the world, both the good and evil things of it: His mind is unhampered, disintangled and set loose, and it is Lord over those whom it before obeyed. *Solomon* expresseth the excellency of the freedom this man enjoyeth in these words, *He that ruleth his own spirit* (or passions) *is better than he who taketh a City*, Prov. xvi. 32.

* *There is no victory more glorious than that whereby we become Conquerours over inordinate affections*, saith St. *Cyprian*.

* *Nulla est major victoria quam quæ de cupiditatibus refertur.*

Nor is there any Victory so glorious.

To do good with a free and willing spirit, with readiness of mind and without reluctance is the most glorious of liberties; and this is the happy consequent of *Self-Resignation*.

For the farther clearing of this grand Truth, know that God is not cruel or over-severe in his restraint of our Wills.

He doth not like *Rehoboam* and wicked Rulers affect to lay any unmerciful burdens and loads on men: Nor doth he, as one ambitious to ſhew his Superiority and abſolute Soveraignty over us, give out his Laws and Commands meerly for his own will and pleaſure. But be we poſſeſt with this important Truth, *That the buſineſs of Religion is wholly for the good of man*; therein God ſeeks not any advantage that may accrue to himſelf, for he is Self-happy, All-ſufficient, and an infinitely perfect Being. *He is not worſhipt with mens hands as though he needed any thing*, Acts xvii. 25. *Our goodneſs extendeth not unto him*, Pſalm xvi. 2. *If thou be righteous what giveſt thou him, or what receiveth he at thine hands?* Job xxxv. 7. In all his injunctions he ſeeks the good, the well-being, the ſpiritual intereſt of his Creatures.

We cannot hurt God by our *Self-willedneſs* and Diſobedience, but we ſhall thereby moſt certainly wrong our ſelves, deſtroy our own Souls; and knowing that this pleaſing our own will is no better than ſweet poiſon, the Lover of our Souls warns us of the danger of ſo doing.

In ſhort thus: God moſt Holy and Wiſe, our Creator and Lord, as he is worthy and moſt fit to give us a Law and Rule to walk by,

by, ſo is that he hath given us moſt *holy, juſt and good.* He doth not command us any thing, nor is there any thing in that Law written in mens hearts, and more fully declared in the Holy Scripture, but it is abſolutely better for us to be obliged to the obſervance of it than otherwiſe; nor hath he forbidden us any thing but it is abſolutely better for us that it ſhould not be allowed us than that it ſhould be; (as would be eaſie to demonſtrate by enumerating the particular Commands and Prohibitions declared in the Goſpel) and therefore it cannot be doubted but that the trueſt *Liberty* conſiſts in the Reſignation of our Wills to the Divine Will.

This excellent and weighty Truth is moſt clearly diſcerned by the *Self-reſigning* Soul; for he never feels himſelf ſo free, or ſo much maſter of himſelf, and in his own power, as when he is engaged in God's Service. But the *Natural* (that is the *Senſual*) man cannot receive this Doctrin, and it is fooliſhneſs to him. He looks upon the Laws of his Creator and Redeemer as too nice and ſevere, and the entire obſervance of them as unneceſſary and troubleſome ſtrictneſs, as if the Wiſdom of God did not better know the juſt bounds and meaſures, where man was to be reſtrained, and

where

where he might be indulged than *he* doth: As if God did not beſt know what belongs to humane nature, and the ordering and regulating mens affections and actions: As if there were envy in the infinitely good God, ill will and an evil eye towards us in denying us any thing that is for our good. But to ſuppoſe this, to have ſuch an inward thought is blaſphemy in an high degree.

It becomes us therefore to have our minds deeply affected with this Truth, That it cannot be Liberty to be looſe from God; the ſubſtance of all he commands us being in its own nature unchangably good, and all his Laws being ſuch as it is moſt fit for us to be governed by: That both his Commands and Reſtraints proceed from his tender love, and care of us.

Though Souls as yet unskilful and unexperienced in Religion do not underſtand thus much at firſt, but are apt to think that God might have dealt leſs ſeverely with them than he hath done, yet they come to be of another mind when they are once grown up to good maturity in Chriſt; then they evidently ſee that all God commands or forbids was out of the moſt tender Goodneſs: And therefore what at firſt was grievous to them becomes their choice; nor do they wiſh to be indulged in this or that

which

which is forbidden; nor that they might be free from this or that which is commanded. They eſteem (with *David*) *all God's precepts concerning all things to be right:* They do not think the way too ſtrait or narrow that leads to life, nor wiſh it broader than it is: They do not wiſh the yoke and burden of Chriſt to be more eaſie or lighter then it is; all they wiſh is, that they were more ſtrong to bear it, to obey more chearfully and conſtantly. They *chooſe* the Way of God's Precepts, they chooſe it as that which beſt tends in it ſelf to their happineſs and wellfare. That which grieveth them is, that they are not ſo ſtrong in Obedience as they ſhould be, and pray for Grace to enable them to obey better; but they ſeek not an indulgence or relaxation. They know for certain that the onely way to have their wills, is to give and *reſign* them to God: And that it is for their *own* advantage not *God's*, that he calls for their hearts; and that he requires them for this end, that he may fill them with true peace, reſt, and Heaven. That he commands them to quit and forſake their falſe ſelves, that they may enjoy their beſt and true ſelves; that he forbids them to gratifie that which the world accounts *Self-love*, becauſe it

it is indeed no other than *Self-hatred.*

The great foundation of mens backwardneſs to receive this Doctrin, is their miſtake of that which they call *themſelves*, their generally valuing themſelves by their *Body*, and their reference to this preſent world; by which means they are chiefly carried out in their affections towards the things thereof, to the pleaſing the *Body*, and ſatisfying its appetites though never ſo unreaſonable and prejudicial to their *Souls* wellfare. The vulgar opinion is, that the *Body* is the *Man*, and conſequently to love the *Body* is for a man to love *himſelf*, and to *make proviſion for the fleſh to fulfill the luſts thereof*, is to make proviſion for *himſelf.*

But the Ancient and wiſeſt Philoſophers, as alſo the Primitive *Greek* Fathers eſpecially, and great Lights of the Church, would not ſo much as allow the *Body* to be one half or part of the *Man:* But this was their ſenſe, *Animus cujusque is eſt quiſque*, Every mans *Soul* is he; and, Ἄνθρωπος ἐστιν ὁ τοῦτο τὸ ὁρώμενον· *The man is not that part which is ſeen:* and the Holy Scripture puts נפש *Soul* for the *perſon* very frequently. Man is a Creature that can think, reaſon and underſtand; and that which doth this is the *Soul* onely, and therefore this is the true *Man.* To do acts proper to a *Man* is above the power

power of *Body* or matter; and therefore the *Body* is called by thoſe low names of an *houſe* and *tabernacle* wherein the Soul dwelleth, both in the holy *Scripture* and the Writings of Philoſophers.

Upon this account God (though he allows us to provide for the neceſſities and due conveniences of the Body) forbids us to love our *Bodies* better than our *Souls*, or equally with them; and permits us not to ſatisfie the cravings of our bodily appetites to the hurt and dammage of our *Souls*. And all the declarations of his will concerning us are for the great end of reſtoring to the *Soul* its dominion over the *Body* and ſenſual part, and maintaining its dignity and ſuperiority.

And when it is able ſo to do by cleaving to God, and willing as he wills, its ſlavery ceaſeth, and it hath recovered true amplitude, largeneſs and liberty. *I will walk at liberty*, (ſaith the Pſalmiſt) *for I ſeek thy precepts*, Pſal. cxix. 95. *Adam* affecting to be looſe from the will of God, thought to have gained more liberty, but he was ſadly miſtaken; for he hereby became a poor contracted and ſtraitned thing. *David* would once be free to gratifie the unwarrantable deſires of his heart; but by this licentious and falſe freedom he loſt the true,

true, he miſerably ſunk himſelf into a poor narrow and ſlaviſh ſpirit: And therefore he prays that God would *renew a right ſpirit within him*; and that he would *eſtabliſh him with a free ſpirit*, Pſal. lj. 10, 12.

CHAP. VII.

That Self-Reſignation is the Sum of the Goſpel-Commands: That all the Ordinances of the Goſpel, and even Faith it ſelf, are in order to this.

VII. *Self-Reſignation* is the Sum of the Goſpel-Commands, the *totum hominis*, the whole Concernment of a Chriſtian. If there be any other Commandment, (as the Apoſtle ſaith of Love) it is briefly comprehended in this, *Thou ſhalt reſign thy ſelf, thou ſhalt deny thine own will, and ſurrender it up to the Divine Will.* This is *the* great Leſſon in the School of Chriſt: *He* (ſaith our Saviour) *that will be my Diſciple muſt deny himſelf, and take up his croſs and follow me.*

As *Plato* would have it written upon his School-door, *Let none enter that is unskilled in Geometry*; ſo this is the moſt proper Motto for the School of Chriſt, *Let none enter*

μηδεὶς ἀγεωμέτρητος εἰσίτω.

enter in here that is not reſolved on Reſignation. Lord, what wouldeſt thou have me to do? (as it was St. *Paul*'s firſt ſaying to Chriſt) is the firſt Leſſon to be minded by all his Diſciples.

And as it is the *Alpha*, ſo is it the *Omega* alſo; 'tis both the firſt and the laſt leſſon of Chriſtianity: All is done when this is done, and till this leſſon be learnt, all that we have done or learnt ſignifies but very little. When we have well gotten this, we are Diſciples indeed: 'Tis not the *ſaying, Lord, Lord, but the doing the will of God* that will give us that title. Mat. vii.

'Tis obſervable that in *Rom.* xii. (a Chapter as full and thick ſet with practical Rules, as richly fraught with divine Morality, and matters of Chriſtian Practice, as any one Chapter in the Epiſtles) I ſay, 'tis obſervable that in this Chapter the Apoſtle deſcribing and inculcating the moſt excellent and becoming inſtances of Practical Chriſtianity, ſets this firſt as comprehenſive of all the particular duties mentioned afterwards, *viz. the giving up our ſelves as a ſacrifice and entire oblation to God*, v. 1. *I beſeech you by the mercies of God that ye preſent your bodies* (that is your *ſelves*, bodies being here put for the whole man, becauſe of the decorous alluſion to the bodies of Beaſts offer-

offered in Sacrifice under the Law) *a living Sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reaſonable ſervice.* In this general Exhortation (together with the words following, which are an illuſtration of it) is ſummed up whatſoever is particularly mentioned in the following verſes, relating to the practice of the ſeveral graces required of a Chriſtian in this world. From hence flow the particular duties hereafter expreſt, and they are all contained herein as in the ſeed and root. Plainly thus---- If ye give up your ſelves as an entire Oblation to God, and ſo your will is reſigned to his, and not conformed to this world, *Ye will ſhew mercy with chearfulneſs, love without diſſimulation, be fervent in ſpirit; you will rejoyce in hope, be patient in tribulation, and continue inſtant in prayer:* you will *diſtribute to the neceſſity of Saints, and be given to hoſpitality: ye will not recompence evil with evil, but overcome evil with good: ye will as much as in you lieth live peaceably with all men.* And ſo for all other duties which concern a Chriſtians life in this world.

So that the Root, the Baſis and Foundation of Chriſtian Practice is *Self-Reſignation*, and from it may be expected every duty and act of a religious life.

There is nothing difficult in Chriſtianity but

but this one thing, when our Wills are once reſigned, all other duties will flow as naturally from us, as ſtreams from a Fountain.

Let me adde, that *Prayer* and all the *Ordinances* of the Goſpel are in order to this; the buſineſs of them all is to faſten and unite our Wills more and more firmly and inſeparably to the Divine Will.

And even that great and high grace of *Faith*, it is wholly ſubſervient to the attainment of this *Self-Reſignation*. The deſign of Faith in the power of God is to encourage us to go forth againſt thoſe *Anakims*, thoſe luſts that war againſt our Souls, that at laſt all may be deſtroyed in the mind and will of man which is contrary to the Will of God; and that we may be perfectly free to obedience.

And as for Faith in the Goodneſs and Mercy of God in Chriſt as to the pardon of Sin, the end of that is not merely that we may have a ſenſe of our being forgiven, but it hath a farther aim, *viz.* that we being delivered from anxious and tormenting fears about the pardon of our ſins, may love God and Chriſt more, may obey more, and our obedience may be more free, ingenuous, natural, and conſtant, as that is which flows from Love.

In a word, Faith looks at the *Divine Promiſes*, that thereby we may be partakers of the *Divine Nature*; for to this end were the *Promiſes* given, 2 *Pet.* i. 3. And to this end they are to be applied: And when we partake of the Divine Nature, our Wills become one with the Divine Will.

CHAP. VIII.

That Self-Reſignation is that wherein conſiſteth the power of Godlineſs; and that, as it diſtinguiſheth both from the inſincere and the weak Chriſtian.

VIII. THis *Self-Reſignation* (as is manifeſt by the laſt Chapter) is that wherein conſiſteth the *Power of Godlineſs*; 'tis the great inſtance, proof, and expreſſion of it.

By *the Power of Godlineſs* I do not mean that onely which is oppoſed to an empty form and ſlight appearnce of Godlineſs, but alſo Godlineſs in its ſtrength and vigour, that which is *powerful* as well as *ſincere* and *real*. To ſuffer no Will to rule in us, but what is agreeable to God's Will; to regulate

late all our inordinate deſires and unruly paſſions, to croſs their cravings, and to have the love of the world and all Self-love overcome in us, theſe are the worthy Atchievements of thoſe Souls who are ſtrong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Theſe are the mighty Acts of thoſe Chriſtians that quit themſelves like men; theſe are the *Magnalia*, the Great things of Religion.

1. This *Self-Reſignation* is the onely expreſſion of that power of Godlineſs that differeth from the *falſe* and *inſincere* Chriſtians. Theſe are, as the *Publicans* and *Sinners*, ſo the *Phariſees* and *formal*. To die to their own will, and *through the Spirit to mortifie all the deeds of the body*, is death indeed to theſe, and the King of Terrors. The ſeparation of their hearts from the luſts they have cleaved to is like the ſeparation of Soul and body to them, and their ſpirits and lives declare that (as much as they may excell in ſome commendable things) here they are ſadly ſhort.

And it is worth our obſervation, that theſe people being inwardly conſcious of their deficiency herein, love to repreſent ſome outward Obſervances in Religion as high and hard matters; ſome things that any carnal man may do if he pleaſe, as well

as they, as the great inſtances of the *power of Godlineſs*.

The phraſe is very common both in their Lips and Books, but it is not therefore to be found in their ſpirits and lives. They are not able to hide their being acted by, and under the power of either ſins of the *fleſh* or of the *ſpirit*. They cannot ſo artificially ape a Chriſtian, as not to bewray an inordinate affection to the world, either the profits, pleaſures or honours of it, and, in too many inſtances, a Will unreſigned to his, whoſe Diſciples and Followers they pretend to be. And from what hath been diſcourſed it therefore appears, that the *power of Godlineſs* is but a word in faſhion among them, a meer ſound, *named*, but not *known* and *experimented* by them. There is a *form of Godlineſs* which may very well agree with the *power of Self-will*: And men may diſcover a great zeal for this or that mode and way, for theſe or thoſe opinions, and againſt ſome certain ſins, profeſs a great love to Chriſt, faith in his merits, and zeal for his honour; they may ſpeak in ſuch a ſtrain of words as is wonderfully taking with the vulgar, have notable gifts in diſcourſing about the things of God, and in praying to him, and herein diſcover much life and affection:

They

They may ſtrain at Gnats, and be very ſcrupulous in ſome ſmall and diſputable things, and yet be *ſelf-lovers*, ſeek, relliſh and pleaſe themſelves, be *lovers of pleaſures more than lovers of God*, *covetous*, *envious*, *proud*, *high-minded*, *unrighteous*, *unfaithful*, *unmerciful*, *uncharitable*; and ſuch as are any one of theſe, for all their ſpecious *form*, are perfect ſtrangers to the *power of Godlineſs*. 1 Tim. iii. chap.

Now I would offer that Queſtion of our Saviour, τι περισσὸν ποιεῖτε, *what do ye more than others?* What excellent, what difficult thing, ſuch as is worthy to be thought an inſtance of the *power of Godlineſs*, do ye? You conſtantly, it may be, frequent the publick Worſhip of God, you hear God's Word, and read the Bible and religious Books frequently, you pray in your Cloſets and with your Families, you do not run with the profane to their exceſs of riot: theſe are good things (and woe be to them that deſpiſe or neglect the external duties of Religion) but if you do no more than this comes to, what extraordinary thing do you? May not any man void of the Spirit do the ſame?

Thou canſt pray without the ſame form of words, thou canſt diſpute and diſcourſe about matters of Religion, and in ſuch a way

as is apt to affect others; thou canſt deny thy ſelf in ſome things which will not diſadvantage thy more beloved ſins, thou doſt reform in ſome things, as to outward garb and deportment: but in all this, *what doſt thou more than others?* Shall *the power of Godlineſs* be placed in thoſe things which meer outward notional Chriſtians and unregenerate perſons may be as ready and dextrous in as others? Alas! what are all theſe and the like to that which the Scripture calls *cutting off the right hand, plucking out the right eye, ſelling all for the pearl of great price?* What are theſe to the *mortifying of earthly members, to the crucifying of the body of ſin*, to the *being dead to ſin?* All which expreſſions are not to be look'd upon as high Metaphors, or Hyperbolical Schemes of Speech, but as ſober realities, and our neceſſary duty. And theſe are the things wherein that *power of Godlineſs* ſhineth forth, which diſtinguiſheth between thoſe that are indeed alive, and thoſe which have onely a name to live.

Thou ſheweſt that thou haſt read much, and heard much, haſt had good Education, haſt kept good company, and art of good natural parts, but how haſt thou proſpered in *Self-Reſignation?* Art thou more crucified

crucified to the world? Haſt thou more power over thy Spirit? Is the power of thy *Self-will* more broken? Art thou more free and ingenuous in thy obedience? God looks at the heart, the temper and quality of the mind, the difference between men and men is mainly within, in the influences and impreſſions of Religion upon their ſpirits, in its bettering their inward frame, and by this means mending the outward converſation and courſe of life.

2. *Self-Reſignation* is likewiſe the onely proof of the *power of Godlineſs* in the ſecond ſenſe, that (as was ſaid) which differenceth *ſtrong* from *weak* Chriſtians, thoſe that are grown nearer to a perfect ſtature in Chriſt, and others which, though they be ſincere, are but Weaklings and Babes in Chriſt.

'Tis according as men excel more or leſs in *Self-Reſignation*, that they are denominated ſtronger or weaker Chriſtians: this fully appears by what hath been already ſaid.

Now who ſeeth not that there is exceeding much in *this* Conſideration alſo to recommend this great Duty effectually to us, and to make us in love with it. For weak Chriſtians, though never ſo well-meaning, do bring nothing ſo much ho-

nour to Religion as the ſtrong do; nay, oftentimes they much diſcredit it. But none can doubt that it is exceedingly more for the honour of our Lord and his Religion to have his Servants ſtrong, healthy and in good heart, than to have onely a company of ſickly, crazy, impotent perſons to attend him, ſuch as are always complaining of difficulties, and to whom every Service that calls for any thing of Self-denial is grievous. 'Tis much more for his honour that his Church ſhould be an Academy of perſons ſtrong and hardy, than that it ſhould be a ſpiritual Hoſpital, a Spittal of diſtempered infirm things: That it ſhould be an Orchard of well grown, fair and goodly Trees bringing forth much fruit, rather than a Nurſery of tender young Plants and little Shrubs. It is not for the honour of Chriſt the Phyſician of Souls, that his Patients ſhould be always feeble, querulous, infirm, ſore and faint, pale and meager, creeping by the walls, and at beſt but between ſick and well; but that they ſhould grow up to an healthy Conſtitution, a good Complexion and ſound temper conduceth greatly to his honour. *Herein is my Father glorified that ye bear much fruit*, John xv. 8.

And,

And though it be true that *God will not despise the day of small things*, and that Christ is far from insulting over the weaknesses of young Christians, where there is at the bottom simplicity and plain-heartedness, the *good and honest heart:* Yet will he not encourage or indulge them neither in a lazy continuing in a state of weakness and Childhood; but is displeased with those, that when for the time they might have been at strong meat, are yet but at milk; that while they should be *fighting the good fight of faith*, and *running with patience the race set before them*, shall lye on the ground complaining, discouraged and disheartned.

And I adde also, that according to the power or vigour of our Godliness, our strength and growth in Grace, we shall have more or less assurance of the goodness of our state, and higher or lower degrees of Glory in the life to come.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

That Self-Reſignation is the Eſtabliſhment of God's Kingdom in us here, and is an Introduction to his Kingdom of Glory hereafter.

IX. *Self-Reſignation* is the Eſtabliſhment of God's Kingdom within us here, and is an Introduction to his Kingdom of Glory hereafter.

1. *It is the Eſtabliſhment of the Kingdom of God and Chriſt within us here.* No ſooner hath a man obtained, by the grace of God, a power over his own Spirit, but this glorious Empire is ſet up in his Soul. When *Selfneſs* is maſtered, and our will brought into compliance with the Divine Will, then is King Jeſus crowned and inthroned within us.

David in his Troubles and in his Triumphs was a Figure and hiſtorical Type of Chriſt: He met with many troubles and difficulties before he was eſtabliſht in his Throne; and the Spiritual *David* meets with many alſo. His difficulties ariſe altogether from the oppoſition of our wills: They rage and ſet themſelves againſt the Lord

Lord and againſt his Anointed, as the *Moabites*, *Philiſtines*, *Amonites*, and houſe of *Saul* did againſt *David*. *We will not have Chriſt to reign over us* is the inward Language of the *Unreſigned*. But no ſooner is *Self-will* perſwaded to yield, but the Kingdom of Chriſt is come into us. We may then cry *Hallelujah*, for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth.

A moſt joyful and high day is this, 'tis the day of Chriſt's Inauguration. The State and Government of a *Reſigned* Soul is (as *Joſephus* obſerves of the *Jewiſh* Polity) a Theocracy.

2. *It is alſo a neceſſary preparation and introduction to the Kingdom of Glory.* Nay, it is the very Conſtitution and Eſſence of Happineſs, and without *Self-Reſignation* there can be no ſuch thing.

The Happineſs of glorified Souls doth not conſiſt in their being above the Stars; for a Soul not reſigned to the Will of God would be as far from Heaven, though mounted to ſuch a heighth, as if it were in the loweſt Abyſs.

A good Angel while he converſeth on Earth, and is fulfilling the pleaſure of God here below, is moſt happy, and carrieth his Paradiſe and Heaven always with him: And if ſuch an Angel might be ſuppoſed

to

to repine and ſtruggle with the Will of God, and ſo not to continue in *Reſignation*, he would conſequently not continue to be happy, though his reſidence were always in the Manſions above.

This is a moſt fundamental Maxim, and of great importance in Practical Religion, That Happineſs, as to the main, is to be transformed into the Divine Image and likeneſs, to partake of the Divine Nature, to have one Will with God, to be free to Obedience: And that the unſpeakable and glorious joy of bleſſed Souls ariſeth chiefly from that harmonious agreement and conſort which is between God and them.

Other notions of Heaven are unſpiritual and carnal, and argue men not to have ſufficiently taſted the powers of the world to come, but to ſavour too much the things of this earth; and, as St. *Auſtin* doth fitly expreſs it, *Cum hoc mundo velle exire extra hunc mundum, to deſire to carry this world along with them, when they leave it.*

And becauſe it is abſolutely impoſſible that man ſhould be in an happy ſtate while he is otherwiſe affected than God is, thence it is that the Infinite, Soveraign, and Perfect Goodneſs requires our Conformity to himſelf, and will have a participation of his Holineſs and Image the condition of attain-

taining a participation of his Happineſs, nor will diſpenſe with purity of heart in order to the ſeeing of him. For without this, without the agreeableneſs of our Wills to the Divine Will, we ſhall be wholly unqualified and unmeet for God's Kingdom, and uncapable of the happineſs thereof.

CHAP. X.

That Self-will is the Root of all Sin and Miſery.

X. *Self-will* on the contrary is the Root of all Sin and Miſery. Every Luſt and Sin grows out of this root of uncurbed deſire and *Self-will*, which is a *root of bitterneſs, a root that beareth gall and wormwood.*

It may be fit here again to obſerve, That in that large enumeration of thoſe ſins and evil diſpoſitions which make times perillous, this is mentioned in the firſt place, *Men ſhall be lovers of their own ſelves.* This is mentioned firſt as being the root and ground of all the reſt. 2 Tim. iii. 2.

It was well obſerved by St. *Auſtin*, *Civitas Diaboli incipit ab amore ſui.* The Devil's City is founded *in ſelf-love* and *ſelf-pleaſing.*

pleaſing. Where *Self-will* is ſet up, there the Soul is impetuouſly carried out to all iniquity with greedineſs, ſo far as it is judged ſafe, and that ſuch or ſuch a ſin is not prejudicial to another more beloved ſin, or to any worldly advantage or Intereſt.

The Soul wherein *Self-will* is ſet up ſaith with proud *Pharaoh*, *Who is the Lord that I ſhould obey him?* This is another *abomination of deſolation ſtanding in the holy place*, erected in the Soul which ſhould be holy to the Lord. *Self-will*, it is an inward and myſterious Antichriſt, *oppoſing and exalting it ſelf above God, it ſits as God* in the heart, that inward temple of God, *ſhewing it ſelf that it is God.*

It is an *Anti-God*, and will be obeyed in all things. It ſets up its *threſhold by God's threſhold, and its poſts by God's poſts.*

In the Scripture, the pleaſing of our own will is frequently put in the general for all ſin. In *Eccleſiaſtes* xi. 9. going on in ſinful and wicked courſes is expreſt by *walking in the way of thine heart, and in the ſight of thine eyes.* In *Jeremy* mens wickedneſs is often ſtiled, *walking after the imagination of their own heart.* And in *Iſaiah* lviij. 13. doing of ſinful actions is called *doing thine own ways*, and *finding thine own pleaſure.*

pleasure. In *Numbers* xv. 39. sinning against God is called *seeking after thine own heart, and thine own eyes.*

And as *Self-will* is the Root of all *Sin*, so is it likewise the Root of *Misery* both here and hereafter.

It being the root of the former, it must needs be so of the latter also; Sin and Misery being inseparable.

And as we shewed that the Happiness of Heaven, as to the main, consists in being transformed into the Divine Image, or the having but one Will with God, so by consequence the Hellish State doth chiefly consist in a perfect contrariety to God, and the Soul's opposition to the Divine Will. Therefore is the Devil a most miserable creature because he is made up of Self-will, because the Will of God is most grievous to him, he sets himself against it, and goes about the world soliciting and endeavouring to draw others from complying with it: And those with whom he prevails, he by so doing makes them as miserable as himself.

If there were no *Self-will* there would be no Hell, according to that of St. *Bernard, Cesset voluntas propria & infernus non erit.* Let *Self-will* cease, and there will be no Hell.

To

To ſuppoſe *Self-Reſignation* in a damned and miſerable Soul, and *Self-will* in an happy and glorified one, is to ſuppoſe the greateſt contradictions and inconſiſtences.

There can be nothing of *Self-Reſignation* in Hell, and nothing of *Self-will* in Heaven.

In ſpeaking to the fourth aud fifth Conſiderations, it hath been ſhewed, that it is impoſſible that that Soul ſhould be miſerable which is ſincerely and intirely reſigned to the Will of God; and on the contrary, that that Soul cannot but be miſerable that wills contrary to him; and therefore I ſhall proceed no farther upon this Argument.

CHAP. XI.

That the Love of Chriſt in dying for Sinners makes the Duty of Self-Reſignation moſt highly reaſonable, and lays the greateſt obligation upon us thereunto.

XI. IN the eleventh place, The Love of Chriſt in dying for us is moſt powerful to oblige Chriſtians to this great Duty of *Self-Reſignation*. Chriſt's giving himſelf

ſelf a Sacrifice and Offering to God in a way of *atonement* and *expiation*, layeth the ſtrongeſt engagement on Chriſtians to offer up themſelves as a Sacrifice to him in a way of *Reſignation* and *Obedience*.

This improvement the Apoſtle makes of this Conſideration, 2 *Cor.* v. 14, 15. *The Love of Chriſt conſtraineth us; becauſe we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead; and that he died for all, that they which live, ſhould not henceforth live unto themſelves, but unto him which died for them.* What could he more expreſs? ---*Should not live unto themſelves*, not pleaſe themſelves, gratifie their own *Self-will* and Luſts, but pleaſe Chriſt, do his will, give him the preheminence in all things: *Not ſeek our own, but the things which are Jeſus Chriſts:* Not minde and purſue our own eaſe, profit and honour chiefly, and above all, but live to his honour and glory, and prefer his Intereſt before our own.

The like inference the ſame Apoſtle makes in 1 *Cor.* vi. 20. *Ye are bought with a price*, (viz. *with the precious bloud of Jeſus Chriſt*) *therefore glorifie God in your body and in your ſpirit, which are God's:* And what is the beſt way of glorifying God, hath been ſhewed in the third Chapter.

The *Death of Chriſt* is the great mani-

festation of *his Love*; by the bitterness of his Cup, by the depth of his Sorrows and Sufferings for us we may make an Estimate of the exceeding height of his dear affection. Behold and see, was there any Sorrow like unto his Sorrow? and therefore was there any Love like unto his Love? *Greater love hath no man than this*, (said Christ himself) *that a man lay down his life for his friends*, but he laid down his life for us when *Enemies*.

Out of Love he left Heaven and the bosom of his Father, and the glorious attendance of the Angels, and humbled himself to a mean, low and afflicted life upon Earth. *He who was rich became poor, that*
2 Cor. 8. 9. *we through his poverty might be rich:* Such was *the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Out of Love he died, he who was *Lord of all*, *the Lord of Glory*, *the brightness of God's Glory*, *and the express Image of his Person*, he humbled himself to death, even the death of the Cross, a death of the greatest pain and shame. And notwithstanding the pains and sorrows, both inward and outward, which he felt, were inexpressibly great; yet after his Resurrection, he would have gone into the Garden again, gone over his Agony again, and drunk that bitter Cup which made his Soul

Soul ſo ſorrowful: He would have gone to *Calvary* and been crucified again; he would have poured out his life to death again and again, if it had ſo pleaſed God, had it been the will of his Father that he ſhould repeat his Sorrows and Sufferings, for the Redemption of man; for he knew nothing but to be obedient and perfectly reſigned to the Will of his Father.

This is that *Love of Chriſt which paſſeth knowledge*, Love beyond compare, Love beyond expreſſions or conceptions; and can there be a more natural, a more powerful engagement to *Self-Reſignation* than ſuch a Love? Did Chriſt ſo freely give himſelf for thee, and ſhouldeſt not thou moſt heartily and willingly give up thy ſelf to him? Was all of Chriſt turned into a Sacrifice for thee, and ſhouldeſt not thou make an intire Oblation of thy ſelf, without any reſerve to him?

It's not only *Ingenuity* but *Juſtice* wholly to live to him that died for thee, and bought thee with ſo dear a price. Did he ſuffer ſuch unexpreſſible pains for us, and ſhall not we be willing to endure ſome pain and ſmart, which at firſt will be, in denying the ſollicitations of our fleſhly mind; and in going about to croſs our own will: And ſhall not we alſo patiently

undergo any ſorrows the Divine Wiſedom ſees it meet to exerciſe us with? the worſt we can undergo in this world being far ſhort of our Saviours Sufferings in our behalf.

CHAP. XII.

That the high and holy Example of Chriſt layeth a mighty Obligation on Chriſtians to Self-Reſignation.

XII. IN the laſt place, The high and holy Example of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt obligeth us very ſtrongly to the practice of this Duty of *Self-Reſignation*. There never appeared in the world ſo perfect and lovely a Pattern and Idea of the beſt life, as was the life of Chriſt. There never ſhined in the world ſuch a Light, nor was he in any thing more a bright and ſhining Example to us than in *Self-Reſignation*. A famous inſtance whereof we have (not to name other places) in that one ſpeech of his, in his Agony in the Garden, recorded in *Matthew* xxvi. 39. and *Luke* xxii. 42. viz. *Father if thou be willing let this Cup paſs from me, nevertheleſs not my will but thine be done.* How bitter this

this Cup was, how great beyond compare the last Sufferings of Christ were, which began in the Garden of *Gethsemane*, and ended in his death on Mount *Calvary*, may appear,

First, *By those significant words that occurr in the story of his Suffering and Agony*, Mat. xxvi. 37. *Then he began*, not onely λυπεῖσθαι *to be very sorrowful*, but ἀδημονεῖν *to be very heavy*, and ἐκθαμβεῖσθαι (*Mark* xiv. 34.) *to be sore amazed*, and that even to an Agony. And both in *Matthew* and *Mark* is that Expression, περίλυπος ἡ ψυχή μου, &c. *My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death.*

Secondly, *By the great weakness of his Body:* In his Agony *he sweat as it were drops of blood*, an extraordinary, unnatural sweat, it falling from him in thick, viscous, clammy drops, and this in a cold Season too. Jo. 18. 18. And so weak was his body at this time, that an Angel comes down from Heaven to strengthen him, *Luke* xxiij. 43. This was a visible manifestation of excessive heavines and a great colluctation within him, his mind so strangely affecting his body.

Thirdly, *By his prayers and tears.* He prayed thrice to this purpose, *Father if thou be willing let this Cup pass from me:* And the third time he prayed ἐκτενέστερον with more

earneſtneſs and vehemence. And when he prayed, he *kneeled down*, ſaith St. *Luke*; *he fell on his face*, ſaith St. *Matthew*; *he fell on the ground*, ſaith St. *Mark:* He lay proſtrate on the ground, and put himſelf into the poſture of loweſt humiliation. And beſides, *his prayers and ſupplications were offered up with ſtrong cryings and tears*, as ſaith the Author to the *Hebrews*, chap. v. 7.

By all this (and more might be added) it appears that this Cup was an exceedingly bitter Cup, and his Sufferings and Sorrows were beyond compare. And yet he was willing to undergo them; though there was that in his humane, natural will which had a great antipathy againſt this Cup, yet it was not overcome and carried away thereby; but the Divine Principle in him did bring this will into a due acquieſcence, and by the power thereof he freely reſigned it up to the will of his Father. He was moſt willing to undergo theſe direful ſufferings, notwithſtanding they were inflicted without any the leaſt demerit of his own, he being perfectly innocent and without ſin.

Now the conſideration of his holy Example lays a great obligation upon us to follow him, as in every other grace, ſo particularly in his *Reſignation:* For the Goſpel

pel represents him not onely as * ἱλαστήριον *a propitiatory Sacrifice*, but also as * ὑποδειγμα a pattern and example. The Gospel doth not onely represent the *Doctrine* of Christ to be *believed*, but the *Life* of Christ to be *followed:* Nor shall any have him for their Advocate and Propitiation, but such as are willing to have him for their Patern and Example, to copy out and imitate his Humility, Patience, Purity, Benignity and *Self-Resignation*. None shall be benefited by his Death, that are unwilling to live his Life.

* Rom. 3.
* 1 Pet. 2.

So far was it from being the intention of our Saviours Death, to make void or lessen the necessity of our being conformed to his Life, that one of the great ends of his coming into the World, and clothing himself with humane nature, was that he might give us an example of living, and be a patern for our imitation: As we may learn from 1 *Pet.* ii. 21, 22, 23. *Mat.* xi. 29. *John* xiii. 15, *&c.*

That God might the more plainly and familiarly teach us how to be like himself, he was pleased to manifest himself in flesh, pitch his Tabernacle among us, go in and out before us in our likeness, and thus visibly

ſibly exhibite himſelf, and become the moſt excellent patern of Purity and Holineſs, that *as he was ſo we might be in this world.*

And I heartily wiſh that Chriſtians did more ſeriouſly conſider what a tranſcendent priviledge and advantage it is that they have the Spirit and Life of Chriſt ſet before them in the New Teſtament, to ſhew what a Spirit they ſhould be of, and what a life they ſhould live. This is ſuch a favour as the people of God had not vouchſafed to them in the Old Teſtament. There were ſeveral manifeſtations of God to the Jews, but they were all far ſhort of this manifeſtation of his in the fleſh; there was nothing in thoſe for imitation, and for the forming of their lives into a conformity to his. And therefore if our lives be not better than theirs, we do not live as becomes Chriſtians, nor are we faithful to this and other advantages we have above them.

But I fear we are too inſenſible of this priviledge, and that we do not think ſufficiently of this, that he who was in *the form of God, took upon him the form of a ſervant*, clothed himſelf with humanity, put himſelf

ſelf into the loweſt and hardeſt circumſtances, was tempted in all points as we, that ſo we might have a compleat Patern and Guide in thoſe many varieties of Conditions, difficulties and temptations we may meet withall, and be more particularly inſtructed how to behave our ſelves therein worthy of Chriſt.

This I know and have obſerved (and I doubt not but others can teſtifie the ſame) That thoſe Chriſtians who are moſt ſenſible of this extraordinary priviledge; that have high and dear thoughts of the Life of Chriſt, which is the Life of God manifeſted in our fleſh, that have it moſt in their eye, and are moſt affected and enamoured with it, are moſt viſibly bettered, and differ eminently from others, that there is a more excellent ſpirit in them, that they are more pure, meek and lowly, more benign and merciful, more reſigned, and every way more exemplary, more of God is in them of a truth, they are greater Ornaments to the holy Religion which they profeſs, and more qualified with ſuch a diſpoſition as renders them more univerſally uſeful to mankind than other Chriſtians.

And

And thus we have ſeen what a many moſt powerful Conſiderations there are, that demonſtrate the exceeding reaſonableneſs of this Duty of *Self-Reſignation*, and ſtrongly oblige and excite us to the Practice of it. Concerning which there ſhall yet more be immediately ſaid in the next Section.

SECT.

SECT. II.

Directions for the attaining this most excellent Temper of SELF-RESIGNATION.

CHAP. I.

That in order to the reſigning our Wills intirely to the Will of God, we ſhould frequently conſider ſuch principles as are moſt available to the effectual ſubduing them thereunto: And ſeveral ſuch Principles further inlarged on.

AND now hoping that what hath been diſcourſed may have perſwaded the Readers to ſome deſires after the attainment of this excellent temper of *Self-Reſignation*, we proceed to direct to the uſe of certain means and helps thereto: Some of which refer more particularly to Active, ſome to Paſſive *Reſignation*, and others to both alike.

First,

First, Let us often consider and labour to be fully possest with the truth and power of such Principles as are available, and have a proper tendency to the effectual subduing our Wills to the Will of God. This sort of Principles hath been largely spoken to; but because we cannot insist over-much upon so highly useful an Argument, nor indeed well speak sufficiently to it, we will dwell a while longer upon it, and entreat the Reader to fix deeply in his mind *these* following Truths also, which, though they are the same for substance with some of the foregoing, deserve to be farther and more particularly inlarged on.

1. *That the Will we are to submit to is the Will of our great Creator, Preserver and Benefactor.* It is the Will of our *Creator*, of him who hath given us our Being, and by whom we are whatsoever we are. Now we have shewn that man's receiving his Being from God, and his dependance upon him for the continuance of it, doth speak it necessarily his duty to be ruled, ordered and disposed by him, so that he can never be disobliged from willing agreeably to the Will of God.

As God is our *Creator*, he hath a right to be our absolute Lord and Sovereign; and he

he being so we must needs acknowledge that we ought to will nothing nor do any thing but what God allows. That we are not to take leave to do what we list, but what God likes best.

Again, 'tis the Will of our great Preserver and Benefactor, who hath ever since we had a Being laid new Obligations upon us, in the continued care of his gracious Providence, and by his renewed mercies and favours. We are nothing without God, we have nothing but from him, and therefore we should do and will nothing, but what he would have us. He, the overflowing Spring of Goodness hath not left himself without witness, is always doing us good, and filling our hearts with food and gladness; doing all that is fit for him to do to please us, being not at all niggardly in the comforts of this life, but bestowing them in such a proportion as is able to content moderate and modest desires, and being richly gracious in affording us advantages and suitable means for a better life. And therefore if we have any the least sense of what is worthy and ingenuous, we will acknowledge it most reasonable and becoming we should do all we can to please him, who hath done so infinitly much to please us. The Apostle well knew the power

power of this Argument, when he ſaid, *I beſeech you by the mercies of God, that you preſent your bodies a living Sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reaſonable ſervice*, Rom. xii. 1.

Nor can there be a more powerful Argument than this to perſwade to *Patience*, to a quiet and meek ſubmiſſion to all the diſpoſals of the Divine Providence; ſeeing for one croſs we have many hundred bleſſings. *Ubi mali gutta eſt, ibi immenſum mare beneficiorum Dei. Where there is one drop of evil there is a large ſea of divine favours and benefits.* And this men would be forced to confeſs, if they were as curious and careful to conſider the many mercies they enjoy, as they are to conſider the few evil things that they ſuffer: If they were duly ſenſible that they are leſs than the leaſt of the many mercies they poſſeſs; but in all their ſufferings God puniſheth them leſs than their ſins deſerve. Holy *Job* thought it reaſonable thus to argue, as prodigious and unparallel'd as his ſufferings were, *Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and ſhall we not receive evil?* Job ij. 10. What? is God bound to be always heaping favours upon us? muſt we have nothing but Sunſhine, fair and calm days, muſt we be fed with nothing but marrow and fatneſs, taſte nothing

nothing but what is ſweet and dainty? If God gives us ſometimes to taſte of the ſour and bitter, to drink of the waters of *Marah*, ſhall we repine and murmure, and think much of it? Far be it from us ſo to do.

2. *The Will we are to obey and ſubmit to is the Will of the infinitely perfect Being, that is moſt holy, moſt good, moſt wiſe, moſt powerful:* And accordingly his Will is moſt holy, good, wiſe and perfect, and therefore infinitely more worthy to be followed than our own Will, which is vain, fooliſh and perverſe, when not governed by his, and hath many fooliſh and hurtful deſires.

If a Child be left to his own Will, it would be his ruine, and it would be much more pernicious to *us* not to be guided, governed and reſtrained by the Will of God.

And when God doth reſtrain and abridg us as to ſome things which our Will would be free and looſe to, we have no cauſe to complain; as thoſe that are come to be grown men, and to have a right judgment of things, do clearly ſee that they had no cauſe to be froward and complain when Children, that their careful and wiſe Parents would not ſuffer them to eat green

traſh,

traſh, nor humour them in every thing they longed for.

God, who is the great Phyſician of Souls, ſeeth it fit in his infinite Wiſedom to reſtrain us from certain things, as a wiſe and careful Phyſician doth his Patient from what he knoweth would be his bane, however grateful to his appetite.

And ſo for the other part of *Reſignation*, Submiſſion to God's diſpoſals, and Patience under afflictions, when it is the will of God we ſhould be exerciſed with them, it is to be yielded to and preferred above our own will, as being the Will of a moſt wiſe and good God, the great Phyſician of Souls, who perfectly knows our frame, and what affliction is neceſſary Phyſick for us.

God is not onely to be conſidered as the great King and Soveraign of the Wold, and therefore his Will to be received with all regard, but he is alſo to be conſidered as the wiſe Phyſician of the World, that hath care of Mankind as of ſick perſons, this World being a great Hoſpital or Peſthouſe, a place for diſeaſed and infected Souls, and afflictions are his Phyſick which he preſcribes and applies according to the ſeveral caſes of his Patients. The ſick Soul is not for this kind of Phyſick, but would rather be pleaſed and gratified; but

God's

God's thoughts are not as our thoughts, nor his will as ours. He will have his Patients to ſubmit to his method and way of Cure, and not quarrel his appointments; herein he is wiſe and good alſo, 'tis an act of great mercy in him to do thus. It would be an act of cruelty in the Phyſician to comply with his Patients humour, and to ſuffer his will to prevail and rule. And there is no true Chriſtian, however *chaſtening is not joyous but grievous* to him for a time, but he finds afterwards that *it yields the peaceable fruit of righteouſneſs*, and that it *was good for him to have been afflicted.*

I added that it is the Will of God moſt *Powerful* as well as moſt *holy* and *wiſe*, that we are to ſubmit to; and this teacheth us how vain and fruitleſs an attempt it is to ſtruggle with and reſiſt his Will. *Woe unto him that ſtriveth with his Maker; let the potſheard ſtrive with the potſheards of the earth*, Iſaiah xlv. 9. So that if we will not be perſwaded to a compliance with the Will of God either from the conſideration of his Holineſs, Wiſdom or Goodneſs, let us dread the terrible effects of his Power. How many inſtances of Irreſignation and ſtubborn Self-willedneſs are to be found in Scripture, whom God made to know, before he had done with them, that 'tis

impoſſible to oppoſe his Will and Power.

3. *The Will we are to be reſigned to commands ſuch things for the moſt part as are in their own nature good, and carry their own reaſon in them; and whatſoever things elſe are commanded, they are in order to ſuch things.* The goodneſs and reaſonableneſs of all God's *primary* Commands, and our Obligation to them, doth not meerly depend upon his Soveraign Authority: Though they are to be obſerved becauſe God commands them, yet he doth not command them onely *pro imperio*, to ſhew his abſolute Soveraignty and Dominion over us, but becauſe they are intrinſecally and eſſentially good, moſt agreeable to his holy nature, and greatly for our good and advantage, infinitely better for us as we are Reaſonable Creatures to obſerve, than to be diſobliged from.

This is the will of God even our ſanctification, 1 Theſ. iv. 3. This is the ſum of all he wills concerning us; and judge in your ſelves, is not a life of Chaſtity better than that of *Uncleanneſs*? Is not *Temperance* and *Sobriety* better than *Surfeiting* and *Drunkenneſs*? Is not *Humility* and *Meekneſs* more lovely and commendable than *Pride* and *Inſolence*? Is not *Juſtice*, *Uprightneſs* and *Truth* better than *Injuſtice*, *Falſhood* and *Oppreſſion*?

Oppreſſion? Is not *Charity* and *Pity* better than *Hatred*, *Cruelty*, and *Hard-heartedneſs?* Is it not more worthy and reaſonable to love God above all, than to prefer any thing before him, he being the higheſt Good, our infinitely beſt Friend and Father, from whom our ſelves and all we enjoy are? Nay, whoſe reaſon doth not tell him, that as the former are moſt amiable and moſt becoming humane nature, ſo the latter are as hateful and unworthy of us?

Is it not better beyond all compariſon to love the Soul which is Spiritual and Immortal, more than the Body which is corruptible and but for a ſhort time, and whoſe wellfare depends wholly upon the Well-being of the Soul? And when we have ſined againſt the Law written in our hearts, or more clearly and largely revealed in the Scriptures, is it not reaſonable and moſt becoming us to repent, to be ſenſible of our unkind and unworthy behaviour towards God, to be grieved that we have offended the Father of mercies, and amend our ways, and do ſo no more, as ever we would expect his favour, and the light of his well-pleaſed Countenance, and thoſe mercies which we moſt need, and which none but he can beſtow upon us? And is not this

better than to continue in disobedience, impenitence, and to harden our necks against God, and not to be affected with any ingenuous sense of our carriage towards him? So that we see Repentance is most agreeable to the quality and condition of our state here; and so is also patient Submission to the Will of God in his disposals of us, both in respect of his Wise Goodness and Soveraign Power, nor can any thing more become us. And nothing is more manifestly unreasonable than to fret and repine at any of the Divine Providences.

And as for the other things God commands, those which are our duty onely by positive institution; as they are but very few under the Gospel, so are they onely commanded for this end, that they may better secure the weightier matters of the Law, the primary commands, and to fit us for a mindful regard and observance of them. And he, who is infinitely wise and good, knowing best what is fittest to be required of us in order to so great an end, it cannot but be highly unreasonable and unworthy not to comply chearfully with his Will declared in *these* also as well as in the *other* Commands.

4. *The Resignation of our Wills to the Will of God hath the promise of a Reward infinitely*

ly above the labour of any ſervices he requires of us, and the pain of any ſufferings he inflicts upon us. Our ſervices are due to God as we are his Creatures, and therefore it would be our duty to yield our ſelves to his Will without the conſideration of any future Reward. And beſides we have more than our ſervices are worth, and our labours and ſufferings amount unto. We are leſs than the leaſt of the multitude of mercies we daily receive. And the very comforts and pleaſures which ariſe from the ſenſe of doing our duty, and from the being buſied in that work and employment which is moſt agreeable to the primitive and proper conſtitution of our Souls, are a great Reward. But that God ſhould confer a Reward upon us upon the account of poor mean ſervices, than which nothing can be better; a Reward ſo rich and glorious beyond expreſſion and apprehenſion, what a conſideration is this! What we do or ſuffer in compliance with the Will of God is far from being above what the heart can conceive, or the tongue expreſs: But the Reward which God will beſtow for this doing and ſuffering is ſuch as is *unſpeakable and full of Glory*, and *paſſeth all underſtanding.* It is ſuch *as eye hath not ſeen, nor ear heard, nor have entred into the heart*

of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him, 1 Cor. 2. 9.

Again, our Services and Sufferings are but for a ſhort time, they are but for this life, which is *but as a vapour that appeareth for a little time, and then vaniſheth away:* But God will reward them with an eternal Reward, with an *exceeding and eternal weight of Glory.* So that well might the Apoſtle *reckon the ſufferings of this preſent time* (and conſequently the ſervices alſo) *not worthy to be compared with the glory which ſhall be revealed in us*, Rom. viii. 18. Thou art not far from thy journeys end, thou haſt but a ſhort life, a little time to teſtifie thy love to God here on earth, and he hath an Eternity to reward thee in; which therefore ſhould encourage our patience to perſevere and hold out to the end. Eſpecially when we conſider, that though this Reward be future, yet it is near, at leaſt, part of it, and a conſiderable part too. Though there will be a further completion of our felicities at the *Reſurrection of the juſt*, and the *great day of recompence*, yet the Souls of the faithful may expect to receive a very conſiderable part of *the recompence of reward* before that day.

Jam. iv. 14.

2 Cor. iv. 17.

And even in *this* life they have ſome earneſts of that glorious Reward, ſome foretaſtes

taſtes of the pleaſures of God's right hand, ſome bunches of the Grapes that grow in the upper and heavenly *Canaan*. And the more Chriſtians endeavour to live the life of Heaven, the more heavenly their affections and converſations are here, the more ſhall they have here of heavenly Enjoyments. And in theſe reſpects the Scripture ſometimes ſpeaks of thoſe that are excellently religious, even whilſt they are in this life, *that they have eternal life*, John vi. 54. 1 John v. 13. And *that they ſit with Chriſt in heavenly places*, Eph. ii. 6.

Laſtly, *This Reſignation to the Will of God is alſo highly conducing to our Temporal Good:* And that not onely becauſe *it hath the promiſe of the life that now is, as well as of that to come*, but becauſe it tends in its own nature hereunto. Here I will particularly and very briefly ſhew that it makes for our profit and advantage, as to our *outward eſtate*, as to our *eaſe and quiet*, and as to our *health and ſtrength*.

1. *As to our outward eſtate.* This it doth, 1. As it engages men againſt Pride, and to Humility and Modeſty. By this means are avoided vaſt and needleſs expences about Attire and Dreſſing, Building, Feaſtings, and a great number of pompous Vanities: And alſo the great charges which men of

aſpiring and ambitious ſpirits are at for the procuring of Dignities, Honours and high Places; and the ſupporting of their Grandeur that they may be the more eſteemed, reverenced, and admired by the world. 2. As it engageth to Temperance and Sobriety, againſt all Senſuality, and a delicious luxurious life. And ſo, expenſive Divertiſements, Sports and Revellings, Incontinence, and making proviſion for the fleſh to fulfill the luſts thereof, which impair and conſume mens Eſtates, and bring not a few to a morſel of bread, are all avoided. The deſires of Temperance are cheap, eaſie and ſoon ſatisfied. 3. As it engages to Meekneſs in oppoſition to Wrath, Malice and Revenge: And by this means, Quarrels, which often coſt men dear, and abundance of expenſive Law-ſuits are prevented. It coſts men much more uſually to revenge Injuries than to bear them. 4. As it engageth to Labour and Induſtry in lawful Callings in oppoſition to Careleſsneſs and Sloth, *which* (as *Solomon* ſaith) *ſhall clothe a man with rags, whereas the hand of the diligent maketh rich.*

Prov. x. 4.

2. *It makes for our eaſe and quiet in the world.* And this 1. As it engageth to Meekneſs and peaceable ſpiritedneſs, which as it is a grace moſt lovely in it ſelf, ſo it makes

thoſe

thoſe that are indued with it lovely and acceptable to others, and wins and attracts good will. 2. As it engageth to Mercifulneſs both in giving and forgiving. None but a Monſter, and one prodigiouſly wicked and unworthy, will put affronts upon and procure trouble to thoſe that are merciſull in theſe two reſpects. 3. As it engageth to Juſtice, Truth and Uprightneſs, in giving to every one his due, in not defrauding, wronging or defaming any; all which plainly tend to the procuring of Peace.

3. *It makes for our health and ſtrength, the good habit and conſtitution of our Bodies, as well as of our Souls.* This it doth 1. As it engageth to Sobriety againſt Exceſs, which both begets and feeds diſeaſes and Diſtempers. Incontinence and Intemperance weaken both the body and the mind, ſhorten life, and make it painful and uncomfortable while it laſts. 2. As it engageth againſt heart-tearing Cares, and ſuch anxious Solicitudes as waſte natural ſtrength, and prey upon the ſpirits. 3. As it engages againſt all inordinate affections, all *fleſhly* as well as worldly luſts. Theſe make men lean and ſick, as *Amnon*'s luſt after *Tamar* made him. 4. As it begets chearfulneſs and tranquillity of ſpirit, which hath

hath a proper efficacy to the preſervation of health. As *a broken ſpirit drieth the bones, ſo a chearful heart doth good like a medicine*, Prov. xvii. 22. 5. As it engageth to honeſt labour in oppoſition to a ſoft and delicate life. Exerciſe hath a natural tendency to the making men hardy, ſtrong and healthful.

Now then, would we be fully, and in all things reſigned to the holy and good will of God, let us obſerve this firſt Direction, and labour after a great ſenſe of the truth of the foregoing Principles, and all thoſe Conſiderations which have been propoſed to our view, which are moſt powerful arguments to perſwade to this Duty.

CHAP. II.

That humble and fervent prayer is a neceſſary and effectual means to the attaining the grace of Self-Reſignation.

II. IN the ſecond place, Being humbled in a deep ſenſe of thy *Irreſignation* and Diſobedience, (wherein thou haſt hitherto walked to the hurt and danger of thy Soul) beg of God this high and holy temper of Soul.

Soul. This one thing deſire thou of God, and ſeek after it all thy days.

Humble and holy Prayer is one of the greateſt helps to the obtaining of any grace or good thing from God. Let us then carefully apply our ſelves to him for this great bleſſing; it being ſuch a one as none but himſelf can give; and he who is our *Father in Heaven*, *the Father of mercies*, will give this, and all good things to them that ask him.

If any of you lack wiſdom (ſaith S. *James*) *let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not: and it ſhall be given him.* Now this *Reſignation* of our wills to the Will of God is the higheſt point of wiſdom; and this ſort of wiſedom is particularly meant in the Text, as appears by the foregoing verſes. chap. i. 5.

But then our Prayers muſt be with *fervency* and in *faith*.

Firſt, *They muſt be fervent. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much:* James v. 16. Not cold and languid deſires, or faint wiſhes.

But we are not to judge of the true fervency of Prayer by the heat of the head or phanſie, but by the heat of the heart and the ardency of our affections. *My heart* (ſaith *David*) רָחַשׁ *boils or bubbles forth a good*

good matter. We are to judge thereof by the paſſionateneſs and earneſtneſs of our *deſires*, not by any thing that is obvious to ſenſe, not by the loudneſs or length of Prayer, (be it without or with a form of words) though it were as long as that prayer of *Baals* Prieſts, *from morning to noon*, or as that prayer among the Papiſts of fourty hours, by which they amuſe the weak and injudicious in ſpiritual things.

There may be as much, yea more, of the Spirit of Prayer, when there are no words at all. There are times when the Spirit maketh interceſſion with groanings that cannot be uttered, affections too quick and ſtrong for expreſſions, and which would cool, if put into words. Thus *Hannah* ſpake in *her heart* to God, her *voice* was not heard, but ſhe poured out her *Soul* before the Lord; and God heard, *who knoweth the ſecrets of the heart, and the mind of the Spirit.* Theſe inward breathings of the Soul are ever very precious to God, and find favour with him.

When a Soul prayeth out of a deep ſenſe and feeling of its wants, and is full of affectionate breathings after God, and hath the moſt ardent and inflamed deſires after Spiritual things, this is true praying with fervency, and in the Holy Ghoſt. And the

ſilence

ſilence of the Soul is louder, and much ſooner reacheth the ears of the Almighty, than the greateſt loudneſs and volubility of ſpeech.

If we would therefore obtain this beſt and moſt divine of all bleſſings, let us pray for it with the greateſt ardour of affection: we may be aſſured that God will never caſt away ſo rich a Pearl as this, upon thoſe that declare themſelves inſenſible of its worth, by asking it in a cold and formal manner.

And the more to excite and quicken our deſires after it, let us know, that if God accepts our prayers, and gives us this holy temper of Spirit, he doth infinitely more for us than what *Herod* promiſed the daughter of *Herodias*. If he gives thee this Empire over thine own Will, he beſtows that on thee which incomparably excells the greateſt earthly Kingdom. The Kingdom of God (as hath been ſaid) is then within us here, and we are thereby made meet for his Kingdom of Glory hereafter. And who that duly conſiders this, can be flat and heavy in his prayers for this Grace?

Secondly, *Our Prayers muſt be alſo in Faith.* Thus S. *James* tells us we muſt ask this Spiritual Wiſdom, in the following verſe: *But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering*----That is, we muſt believe that as God

God is able, ſo he is as willing and ready to give us what we ask, *if we ask according to his will*, as S. *John* qualifies it, 1 Ep. v. 14. And it is according to his Will, and pleaſeth him highly that we ask Spiritual Wiſdom.

This Faith is the ground of all addreſs to God, *Heb.* xi. 6. *He that cometh to God muſt believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently ſeek him.* And this he will aſſuredly be in his own time, which is always the beſt. God may ſometimes make as if he did not hear, that we may ſeek him more diligently and pray more fervently, that he may prove our patience and juſt valuation of his bleſſings, and that we may be the more thankful for them when we have them, prize them the more, and improve them the better; but if we perſevere in earneſt and believing praying, we ſhall undoubtedly in due time obtain. And as for ſuch ſpiritual good things as are neceſſary to Salvation, we are to pray for them with ſuch a faith, as to aſſure our ſelves that God will give them, if we ask aright; his moſt gracious nature and promiſes aſſuring us that he cannot deny them to ſuch askers.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

That in order to our being entirely reſigned to the Divine Will, we muſt be willing pati Deum, *to ſuffer God, and abide the power of his Spirit working in us.*

III. THirdly, Having poured out thy Soul before God in humble and earneſt Prayer, thou muſt be willing *pati Deum*, to ſuffer God, and abide the power of his Spirit working in thee.

To this purpoſe there is an obſervable paſſage in St. *Auſtin* on Pſalm cli. 3. *Magni languores, ſed major medicus*, &c. *Be the maladies of thy Soul never ſo great, yet there is a Phyſician that is greater, and who never fails to cure; for to an all-powerful Phyſician nothing is incurable, onely thou muſt patiently ſuffer thy ſelf to be cured. Do not thruſt back his hand when he begins to touch thy ſores, and ſearch thy Souls wounds: He well knows what he is a doing, do not hinder and reſiſt when it begins to pain, be not ſo delicate and tender to thine own hurt, but with a quiet patience bear for a while the anguiſh when he cuts and lanceth, conſidering that the preſent pain makes way for thy future health and ſoundneſs.*

Let

Let not Christ and his holy Spirit have cause to say of thee, (as it was said of *Babylon*) *we would have healed him, but he would not be healed.*

Ut corpus redimas ferrum patieris & ignes.

For the health and safety of the body (in case of a Gangreen or other dangerous disease) how do men endure a tedious course of Physick and much torment?

Ut valeas animo quicquam tolerare negabis?

And for the health of thy Soul, infinitely more considerable than a little longer life and ease of the body, (which is all that Physick or Chirurgery can at any time effect, but can never secure) wilt thou not endure the pain of being cured of its diseases, which let alone will make thee eternally miserable?

Let us be therefore entreated, as ever we would obtain this Divine temper of *Self-Resignation*, to take heed of *quenching the Spirit*, of *resisting the holy Ghost*, as the Jews did, and paid dear for it. Take we heed of stifling any of his Convictions, and rejecting his Motions: Let us not seek to shift off and put by serious and awakening thoughts working in us, as the usual practice of sinners is, by diverting to the vain entertainments

1 Thes. v. 19.
Acts vii. 51.

ments and false pleasures of the world and the flesh, nor endeavour to drown the voice of Conscience, which is the voice of God, and to be heard with a reverend regard.

If we would have Christ sit as a Purifier and refiner in the midst of us, to purge us as gold and silver, that we may offer our selves unto the Lord an offering in righteousness, we must abide the day of his coming.

But alas! I must needs observe by the way, there are but few of the Christian Profession who are thus patient, and will endure the refining and purifying work of the Spirit. Most would with *Simon Magus* have the Holy Ghost in his Gifts, such as may make them seem some great ones, and procure admiration to them, but few would have the *renewing of the Holy Ghost*, and the *Sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience*. Many would be glad to have the Spirit to sit as a Refiner upon their Lips, that they may be able to speak spiritually, but few are willing that he should sit as a Refiner in their Hearts to melt and consume their Self-will, and purge out of them all secret inclinations to Sin. Abundance have learnt Parrot-like, to talk of the Spirit, and pretend greatly to things Spiritual,

which yet declare by their lives as those in St. *Jude*, that they are altogether *Sensual, having not the Spirit*, that they have received no other Spirit but that of the world.

It hath been a great and common fault, which hath been the occasion of a world of mischief to Souls, that men have been valued as Spiritual by the *gifts* of the Spirit, (such as the veriest hypocrites may have) rather than by the *Graces* and fruits of the Spirit, such as those *Gal.* v. 21, 22.

But to return to our present Direction: Would we have our Wills fully resigned to the Will of God, let us above all things beware of *grieving his holy Spirit*, according to the Apostles Caution, *Eph.* iv. 30. Let us take heed of rejecting him, when he offers to work this work in us, and of giving him any the least check or discouragement, but permit him to have his full scope and liberty of doing what he pleases within us without disturbance. When Christ *stands at the door and knocks*, and waits to be gracious to us, let us not refuse to open to him, nor seem not to hear him; but say with *Samuel, Speak Lord, for thy servant heareth.*

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

That we are not onely to suffer the Spirit to work in us, but ought also to work with him in heartily opposing our Self-desires; and what endeavours we should use is shewed in five Particulars.

IV. FOurthly, We must not be meerly passive, and onely suffer the Holy Spirit to do his work in us, but we must likewise work with him in vigorously resisting and crossing our Self-desires. We must put on heroical resolutions stoutly to oppose the impetuous desires of our sensitive powers. *It is God that worketh in us both to will and to do*, but yet we must also *work out our own salvation with fear and trembling. We must strive according to his working which worketh in us mightily.* We must be faithful to that lesser light and strength which is in us, and we shall have more light and strength. If we be faithful in fewer Talents, we shall receive more. And here take these following Directions. Col. 1 ult.

1. *Deny the first Sollicitations, and resist the first motions of inordinate appetites, de-*

preſs them at their firſt riſing. Quench ἀναθυμιωμένην ὀρέξιν *Luſt when it doth begin to ſmoak*, (as *Juſtin Martyr* phraſeth it) before it burſteth out into a flame; for then it will be unruly and too hard to maſter. Think not to eaſe thy ſelf by giving ſome ſatisfaction to thy luſts; for by this means they will ſollicite and vex thee the more; and the yielding to commit a ſin leaves a greater propenſion and deſire to ſin again. Thou ſhalt beſt ſilence the clamours and importunities of a temptation, by not liſtening in the leaſt to them. As one act of mortification prepares for and enables to another; ſo on the contrary, by once yielding to corrupt nature, thou art made leſs able to reſiſt another time.

Facilius eſt initia affectuum prohibere, quàm impetum regere. Seneca epiſt. 86.

2. *As to thoſe ſins which either through Conſtitution or Cuſtom thou haſt the ſtrongeſt inclination to, thou muſt ſhew a more than ordinary roughneſs and ſeverity againſt them.* It is not ſafe ſo much as to diſpute or argue with temptations to ſuch ſins. It was a good obſervation of *Ariſtotle*, that *ſome paſſions are not to be vanquiſhed* λόγῳ ἀλλὰ βίᾳ, *by reaſon but by force*; that is, not ſo much by the one as by the other. Not ſo much by arguments as by a holy violence and reſolution.

And there is not more need of taking this

this course against any temptations, than those that solicite to the Sin of *Uncleanness*. *Duriora sunt prælia castitatis*, saith S. *Cyprian*: *The battles of Chastity are more sharp than any other.*

The forementioned Philosopher in his *Ethicks* observing that *man is* ζῶον εὐθήρατον ὑπὸ τῶν ἡδονῶν, *a creature very apt to be taken and ensnared by pleasures*, adviseth, that for the attaining of vertue (the middle between two extreams) we should shun that extream most, and keep fartheſt from it, which pretends to most pleasure*. This is good advice, and there cannot be better given for the attaining the vertue of Chastity, and the overcoming temptations to Uncleanness, which of all other sins doth promise the most pleasure, than not to trust our selves to enter into the least parley with them, but presently to fly from them, by diverting our selves to other thoughts, and forcing our minds to other objects.

τὰ ἡδέα ὑπὸ βίαια. *Arist. Eth.*

*Ἐν πάντι μάλιστα φυλακτέον τὸ ἡδὺ καὶ τὴν ἡδονήν.

3 *We ought, as much as lieth in us, to shun whatsoever may probably be an occasion of our being tempted, especially to such sins as we are most inclined to.* Art thou prone to excess either in meat or drink? Art thou apt suddenly to take fire, and to be inflamed with passion? Art thou of a lustful temper, or

the like? Avoid all thou canſt ſuch places, company, and objects as may be incentives to thoſe appetites. Thus in order to the avoiding of the Sin of Uncleanneſs, the Wiſeman adviſeth, *not to come near the houſe* of the whoriſh woman: and for the prevention of the Sin of Drunkenneſs, not ſo much as to *look on the wine when 'tis red, and giveth its colour in the glaſs.*

4. *It is of good uſe for the better ſecuring our perſeverance in the ſpiritual warfare, with humble dependance on God for the aids of his grace, to engage our ſelves in ſolemn vows againſt thoſe ſins eſpecially which have gotten moſt power and dominion over us.* I cannot commend the obliging our ſelves by vows to certain tasks (as the manner of ſome is) which have not an immediate and ſpecial tendency to the mortifying of Sin, and advancement of Holineſs. Such vows are found by experience to be both unprofitable and burdenſome, to be inſnaring and hampering, and rather to gratifie Superſtition, and miniſter queſtions and ſcrupuloſities, than godly edifying. But to vow againſt things unqueſtionably evil, and to the uſe of certain means that are neceſſary to the deſtroying the body of Sin, and that firſt, for a ſhorter ſpace of time, and afterwards for a longer; and ſo, that time being

being expired, to renew these vows as long as we shall see it needful, and till we be well grounded and established in Holiness, till Religion become our nature, the temper and constitution of our Souls, the joy of our hearts, and our deliberate choice and settled practice, till we have gotten the compleat mastery over those lusts which we have been most carried away captive by; I say, to vow with such cautions is found by experience to be of exceeding great benefit and advantage.

And when we have thus vowed, we should frequently reflect upon what we have done; and then especially, when we are solicited by the Tempter within or without to sin. Let us then say with holy *David*, *Thy vows are upon me, O God: I have sworn, and I will perform it, that I will keep thy righteous judgments.* Neither hopes nor fears, neither the terrours nor allurements of the world shall dissuade me from a faithful obedience to them. Psal. lvi. 12. Psal. cxix. 106.

Vows prudently mannaged are of great use to secure us to Religion; and this is the onely end of them. *To vow* (saith *Cajetan*) *is nothing else, but to fix the mind, and make it immoveable, that it may not start back from the practice of Religion.* *Votum nihil aliud est, quàm animum immobilitate nè possit retrogredi.*

And as for those that are shye or slack thus to engage and devote themselves to God, (which I fear in most proceeds from a too dear affection to some sin or sins) let them know that God's Vows are already upon them, they are under the Obligation of the Baptismal Vow, *to renounce the Devil and all his works, the vain pomp and glory of the world, the covetous desires of the same, and the carnal desires of the flesh, so as not to follow nor be led by them.* So much is implied in being baptized in, or into, the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. And besides, those that have received the Lord's Supper, have thereby virtually renewed their Vow in Baptism. In this other Sacrament we make a Profession, that *we offer and present unto God our selves, our Souls and Bodies, to be a Holy and Lively Sacrifice to him:* Than which there is nothing more due or reasonable, considering the great Love of God in giving his Son for us, the great Love of our Saviour Christ in his Death and Sufferings represented in this Sacrament, and the great Blessings procured for us by the Bloud of that spotless Lamb. So that all of us, young or old, have already bound our Souls with a Bond, (as to vow is described *Numb.* xxx.) being under the engagement

gagement of either one or both these Sacramental Vows; and therefore in exhorting you to oblige your selves by solemn Vows to the duties of Religion, I do not advise you to a new thing, but onely to repeat what you have already done; and if you intend to stand to the Vows you have made, what should deter you from reiterating them whilst you have need of them.

But always remember when you vow to the Lord, to do it with a trust and faith in his power and all-sufficient Grace, and with a distrust of your own natural ability to perform your Vows: And when at any time you have failed in the performance of them, be deeply humbled before God, and renew your Engagements with a greater sense of your weakness and falseness of heart, and be more watchful over your selves, and let your falls make you more narrowly look to your feet for the time to come.

5. *Fasting is another means to be used for the mortification of the body of Sin.* It is of great consequence, and necessary to the health of the inward man, to keep under the body, to humble, chastise, and bring it into due subjection. This was the practice of St. *Paul* himself, who had not such unruly

unruly paſſions and appetites to tame as we have.

Religious Faſting is of great uſe to the ſubduing of the Body to the Spirit, and to the ſtarving of corruptions by cutting off their proviſion, as the ungovernable beaſt is made tame by taking away his provinder. And there are a ſort of Devils that will not go out without Faſting added to Prayer, and other means; but 'tis moſt eſpecially of force for the caſting out the *Unclean* Devil: And according as we find we ſtand in more or leſs need of this remedy, we ſhould oftener or ſeldomer make uſe of it.

CHAP. V.

Of the great power and efficacy of Faith in God; Faith in his Power and Goodneſs.

V. FIfthly, The next Direction I ſhall give in order to ſubduin gour Wills to the Will of God, is that of our Saviour, *Have Faith in God*, Mark xi. 22. Have faith in his *Power* and *Goodneſs*; this will adde life to our prayers, this will animate and ſtrengthen all our endeavours.

Take

Take heed of doubting whether the Lord's hand be not ſhortned, that it cannot ſave; whether his ear be not heavy, that it cannot hear; or his bowels ſhut up, that he is not ready to help.

Take heed of queſtioning, whether thine own Will and ſelfiſh deſires be not ſtronger than can be ſubdued, of entertaining ſuſpicious thoughts, that after all thy endeavours to win the Spiritual *Canaan*, there will be no arriving at that Land of Reſt, but that at laſt thou ſhalt die in the Wilderneſs; that there is none or but little hope of overcoming γιγαντώδη θύμον, *the Giant-like mind*, (as the expreſſion is in *Eccleſiaſticus* xxiii. 4.) and thoſe ſons of *Anak* that thou findeſt vigorous and ſtrong in thee. For by this thine unbelief or weakneſs of faith thou greatly diſhonoureſt either the Power or Goodneſs of God, who is able, and as willing as able to ſave the Soul that truſteth in him. And by this means will the Chariot-wheels of thy Soul be taken off, thou wilt extreamly diſcourage and infeeble thy ſelf, and blunt the edge of thoſe weapons wherewith thou art to encounter thy Spiritual Enemies.

If thy Soul be upright in thee, if thou art ſincere and hearty in imploring the aids of

of God's Grace and the aſſiſtances of his Spirit, and haſt faith to be healed, and delivered from the Luſts that fight againſt thee, thou ſhalt undoubtedly *ſee the ſalvation of the Lord*. He *will teach thine hands to war, and thy fingers to fight*; he *will gird thee with ſtrength, and thou ſhalt be more than conquerour through Chriſt that loveth thee.*

Though thou haſt no might againſt that great company that cometh againſt thee, againſt fleſh and bloud, principalities and powers, yet if thou waiteſt on the Lord, and art of good courage, he will ſtrengthen thine heart, he will ſtrengthen thee with ſtrength in thy ſoul, and through him thou ſhalt do valiantly, and tread down thine enemies. He that is in thee will be greater than they that are in the world, viz. *the luſt of the fleſh, the luſt of the eye, and the pride of life.*

Take heed therefore of all ſuch reaſonings, ſuggeſtions and principles as tend to beget a deſpondency and fainting of Spirit, but *lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees.* To the Soul that believes all things are poſſible. Let Faith ſay unto any mountain of difficulty, *be thou removed*, and it ſhall be done. *Who art thou, O great mountain?* before this bleſſed Grace, and in the exerciſe of it, *thou ſhalt become a plain.* Thy Self-will and Luſts are there-

therefore ſtrong, becauſe thy Faith is weak, and thou in that regard makeſt but a faint reſiſtance. But if thou wert ſtrong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, if thou didſt *reſiſt*, *ſtedfaſt in faith*, thou ſhouldeſt ſee thine Adverſaries flye before thee. *This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith*, 1 John 5. 4. *Above all take the ſhield of faith, wherewith ye ſhall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked*, Eph. vi. 16.

Glorious things are ſpoken of thee, O Faith, who can recount the mighty acts and great atchievements of thoſe holy Souls who have ſtrongly confided in the gracious power of God and Chriſt Jeſus for the *ſubduing* of ſin, as well as in God's mercy and Chriſt's merits for the *pardon* of it. Theſe through this Faith (that I may borrow thoſe expreſſions in the Eleventh to the *Hebrews*) *have ſubdued Kingdoms*, even the Kingdoms of divers luſts and pleaſures, and the Kingdoms of the Prince of this world to which they were once ſubject: Through Faith *they have wrought righteouſneſs*, even the righteouſneſs of God, far excelling that outward ſlight and partial righteouſneſs of the Scribes and Phariſee: Through Faith *they have ſtopped the mouths of Lions*, the impetuous and ravening ſolicitations,

citations and greedy desires of their selfish will: Through Faith *they have quenched the violence of fire*, (or the Lusts of Passion, Malice and Uncleanness, which burned like fire within them) *out of weakness were made strong, and turned to flight the armies of the Aliens.*

Now there are many exceeding great and precious promises scattered through the Scriptures which are of soveraign force and virtue for the encouragement of our Faith and Hope in God, for the strengthening of us against his and our enemies; But there is abundantly enough in that one passage, Luke xi. 13. *If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your Children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the holy Spirit to them that ask him.* What could our Saviour have spoken more plainly and fully for our encouragement to a dependance on God for Grace and Spiritual strength, and to a quiet unsolicitous expectation of assistance from him?

This promise concerned not onely those Disciples that heard Christ preach then from the Mount, but all his Disciples and Followers, all that shall believe on his Name to the end of the world. It is said ------*to them that ask him*, without any limitation

tation either to a certain age or people, language or nation; and therefore we may be as much comforted from these words, as if we had been in the number of those in whose hearing our Saviour preached that best of Sermons, wherein they were uttered: For, as there is the same need of the Holy Spirit for *us* as there was for *them* who were then present with our Saviour, so there is now, and ever will be, the same benignity and philanthropy in God, the same good will, compassion, and love to men, that there was then and in former ages. He is *without variableness or shadow of turning, the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.*

But this word of promise is so rich and precious, that it deserves a more particular Consideration.

If ye that are evil] Earthly Parents are too commonly envious and niggardly, close, hard and cruel to others, being all for themselves, and not caring for the good of others.

----*Know how to give good gifts unto your Children*] As backward as they are to give to others, they cannot find in their hearts when their Children ask to withhold from them, they will be free, open-handed, and bountiful to them: And such is the tender-

ness

neſs of their affection to their Children, that they will not give them any thing that they know to be evil and hurtful to them; they will not give them Stones for Bread, a Serpent for a Fiſh, or a Scorpion for an Egg.

How much more ſhall your heavenly Father] He who being good cannot but *do* good; He who is *the Father of Mercies, the God of Love* and Goodneſs, and *Love* it ſelf; He who beſt knows what is good, and is beſt able to beſtow whatſoever is ſo; He who is as willing to do us good as he is able, and as able as willing, (as no earthly Parent is) He in whom is nothing of envy towards others, and hath in himſelf all fullneſs, is Infinite, Almighty, and All-ſufficient.

-----*Give the holy Spirit to them that ask him*; ſo ſaith one Evangeliſt, and *give good things*, ſaith another. The greateſt good that Omnipotence it ſelf and infinite Goodneſs can do for us, is the giving the holy Spirit, and with him ſpiritual light to know, and ſpiritual ſtrength to do *his* Will, and to ſubdue our *own* Wills, and whatſoever is contrary to him in us. To be indued with the holy Spirit doth import an acceſſion both of light and ſtrength, knowledge and power.

So

So that our Saviour argues from the leſs to the greater, from the drop of goodneſs and benignity in Creatures, and thoſe ſinful Creatures too, to that Fountain-fulneſs which is in God. What good ſoever children may expect from their Parents, that, and infinitely more, may God's Children expect from him. And it is impoſſible to conceive that the infinitely good God will be more wanting to his Childrens *Souls*, than are evil men to their Childrens *Bodies*.

All that στοργη, thoſe affections and tenderneſſes which God hath implanted in all Parents for the good of their Offspring, are but a little drop to that ocean of Love and Mercy that is in himſelf; are but a dark and ſhort repreſentation of thoſe unconceivable riches of Goodneſs, and bowels of Compaſſion which are in him. *Nullus Pater tam Pater*, *No Father is ſo fatherly, ſo much a Father as God is*, ſaid *Tertullian*. He is μητροπάτωρ (as *Clemens Alexandrinus* ſtiles him out of *Orpheus*) *the tenderneſſes of both a Father and Mother are in God. Can a woman forget her ſucking child, that ſhe ſhould not have compaſſion on the ſon of her womb, yea, they may forget*, (it is poſſible, but very prodigious) *yet will not I forget*, ſaith God, *Iſaiah* xlix. 15.

God doth not take empty titles to himſelf,

ſelf, but fills up the utmoſt of whatſoever relation he is ſet forth by in the Holy Scriptures. Whatſoever the wiſeſt, moſt careful and loving Parents are to *theirs*, God is ſuch, and incomparably more, to *his* Children.

If the affections of ten thouſand Parents were in one Father or Mother, how ſecure would the Child be of their tender care, (who indeed is ſecure without ſuch a ſuppoſal) but all theſe in one perſon are far ſhort of God's affection, who is the Spring and Original of all the Fatherly tenderneſs which is diffuſed in the hearts of ſo many millions of Fathers, as are in the world.

Let me adde this, That *the promiſe of the Spirit* is the great promiſe of the Goſpel, the great priviledge of the Evangelical Diſpenſation or New Covenant. Greater aids and ſupplies of Grace, for the ſubduing our corruptions, we are encouraged to hope for under the Goſpel. The Apoſtle ſaith, *Titus* iii. 6. that the Holy Ghoſt is *ſhed on us abundantly* (πλουσίως, in a rich and plentiful manner) *through Jeſus Chriſt our Saviour.*

If therefore we be not ſtronger, if we are not better, it is becauſe we reſiſt, or at leaſt neglect, the Holy Spirit. It is becauſe we have not *faith in God*, not becauſe he is unwil-

unwilling to help and aſſiſt us: For what ſaith St. *James*, chap. iv. 5, 6. *The Spirit that dwelleth in us luſteth to envy, but God giveth more grace:* He gives grace in ſuch a meaſure as to overpower that ſpirit that luſteth in us. So that, for that περισσεια κακιας *abundance of wickedneſs*, (as the expreſſion is *James* 1. 21.) there is περισσεια χαριτος, *an abundance of grace*, (as the phraſe is *Rom.* 5. 17.) which the regenerate and believing Soul receiveth by Jeſus Chriſt. *For it pleaſed the Father, that in him ſhould all fulneſs dwell, that of his fulneſs all might receive even grace for grace. And this grace ſhall reign through righteouſneſs unto eternal life, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord.* Col. 1. 19. Rom. v. 21.

Thus you ſee what abundant encouragement we have *to have faith in God* for the ſupplies of his Grace and Spirit, and what reaſon we have to take heed of unbelief, if ever we would maſter our ſinful affections, and bring our wills into compliance with the Will of God.

And there is a double unbelief we are to beware of, as very hurtful to our Souls.

Firſt, An Unbelief in relation to the *mercy* of God for the pardon of Sin.

Secondly, An Unbelief in relation to *the power and goodneſs* of God for the ſubduing of Sin.

Now it is much to be lamented that whereas the former ſort of unbelief is much taken notice of and condemned in Sermons and Books, the latter is but little mentioned. But if the evil of this were no leſs clearly and powerfully repreſented than the evil of the other, and men were as effectually warned to beware of this as of that Unbelief, it would, through the bleſſing of God, be an excellent means to make more ſincere, ſtrong and healthy Chriſtians: Whereas alas! the ſpirits and lives of the generality of Profeſſors do now too plainly declare that they had rather have ſin pardoned than ſubdued, that they had rather ſin ſhould not be imputed to them than deſtroyed in them.

But the compleat Faith is this in oppoſition to that twofold Unbelief.

Firſt, To believe that Chriſt came to make expiation for ſin, ſo that it ſhall be pardoned to thoſe that do truly repent. That is, to thoſe that being ſenſible of their ſins, and are affected with a godly ſorrow for them, and an holy hatred and abhorrence of them, deſire and purpoſe above all things to walk before God in newneſs of life. Which conditions of pardon and non-imputation of ſin are by too many either not at all, or but ſlightly inſiſted

ſiſted on, while they preſs the duty of recumbence, and relying on Chriſts merits for Juſtification and Salvation.

Secondly, To believe that as Chriſt came to make atonement for ſin, ſo he was manifeſted alſo for this purpoſe, that *he might deſtroy the works of the Devil:* And to procure grace for us, whereby ſin may have no more dominion over us. But this part of faith, I ſay, is little urged in compariſon of the other, whereas it is of as great concernment to our eternal happineſs to have Faith in the Power of Chriſt, as to have Faith in his Bloud. Nay, (as appears from what hath been ſaid) to have ſin mortified, and to be enabled to will after the Will of God, is far more than to be meerly pardoned for willing otherwiſe than God doth will. 1 Joh. iii. 8.

Now their defect in this latter part of Faith, is a great cauſe of Chriſtians continuing ſo low and weak, lazy and faint, in a ſickly and even bed-rid condition, and of their fancying that they honour and pleaſe God by complaining of their impotence and infirmities; whereas the true way to pleaſe and honour him is, confiding in his omnipotent grace, to get up and be doing.

But I fear I may alſo adde another reaſon why moſt of thoſe that will confeſs their

ſins, and pray for grace and ſtrength againſt them, are ſtill as impotent, as if there were no grace or aſſiſtance promiſed; namely, their not being heartily *deſirous* of grace, as well as their want of faith in the promiſes of it: Their unwillingneſs, whatſoever they pretend, to have ſome luſt or other mortified, and to be throughly purified: Their ſecret fear of the ſearching and purging work of the Spirit, and of that light and grace that would diſquiet them, and not let them alone in ſome ſins to which they are fondly and tenderly devoted. It was one of St. *Auſtin's* Confeſſions: *I, when I was a young man, begged of thee that thou wouldeſt indue me with the grace of Chaſtity, and ſaid, Give me Chaſtity, but not yet; for I feared leſt thou ſhouldeſt preſently hear me, and immediately heal me, and I had rather ſatisfie luſt than have it extinguiſhed.*

Ego adoleſcens petieram à te Caſtitatem, & dixeram, Da mihi Caſtitatem, ſed noli modò: timebam enim nè me citò exaudires, & citò ſanares, malleham explere quam extinguì. Confeſſ. l. 8. cap. 7.

If this be thy caſe, (whoſoever thou art that readeſt theſe lines) if this be the ſtate and temper of thy Soul, then in thy complaining of weakneſs, and that the ſons of *Zervia* are too hard for thee, and in thy praying

praying for the assistance of God's grace against them, thou dost no better than add sin to sin, the sin of false dealing with God, and wicked hypocrisie to that of Unbelief; *thy heart is not right with God, and thou lyest unto him with thy tongue.*

But to conclude this: Let us take heed lest there be in any of us an evil heart of Unbelief, and so we fall short of the Spiritual *Canaan*, and entring into the rest of God, as it befell the unbelieving Israelites, who perished in the Wilderness, and none of all that came out of *Egypt* entred into *Canaan* but *Caleb* and *Joshuah*, men of another Spirit, and that followed God fully; who were full of Faith, and encouraged the people to believe and prosper.

And it is observable that *Caleb* asked for the mountainous Country where the *Anakims* dwelt, and the Cities were great and fenced, by the news of which the evil Spies dismayed *Israel*; but *Caleb* gave proof of the strength of his Faith, in freely chusing to expose himself to the hard and seemingly impossible service of gaining this Country, and was rewarded with success answerable to so great a faith: for we read that he drave out the three sons of *Anak*, notwithstanding that it was commonly said, *Who can stand before the sons* Joshuah xiv. 12. Chap. xv. 14.

Anak? He made it manifeſt that Faith could ſtand before them and overcome them.

And if we have *Calebs* Faith in the power and goodneſs of God in fighting with the Spiritual *Anakims*, we may be moſt undoubtedly aſſured of *Calebs* ſucceſs.

Let the Spiritual *Iſrael* therefore encourage themſelves in the Lord their God, and they may be certain that it ſhall be unto them according to their faith; *his grace ſhall be ſufficient for them*; and *when the enemy ſhall come in like a floud, the Spirit of the Lord ſhall lift up a ſtandard againſt them.*

CHAP. VI.

Of the wonderful efficacy of Love to God and Divine things.

VI. SIxthly, Labour to be affected as much as is poſſible with the Love of God and Divine things. To Faith add Love, they are joyned together in Scripture, and ſhould be conjoyned in the hearts of Chriſtians. In 1 *Theſſalonians* 5. 8. Love as well as Faith is called a breaſtplate, whereby we may be ſecured againſt the aſſaults of temptations.

1 Tim. i. 14.
2 Tim. i. 13.

If

If the Love of God be perfected in us, we ſhall find Self-denial and *Self-Reſignation* as eaſie and pleaſant as heart can wiſh. Love will make us think nothing precious that God will have us part with: it will make us with great chearfulneſs to part with a *right eye*, a *right hand*, our own will *if it offend us*. It will make us without grudging to croſs our own will, when it contradicts the Will of our Beloved. It will cauſe us to believe no ſuffering harſh that God ſhall inflict, no duty difficult which he ſhall command. *This is the love of God, that we keep his Commandments, and his Commandments are not grievous*, 1 John 5. 3.

If you love me is a familiar and potent form of ſpeech with us, to perſwade one another to the doing or forbearing any thing; and what *humane* love doth work among men, that and wuch more will be effected by *divine* Love. This is a far more powerful and vigorous principle of action. And yet the effects of that Love have been very ſtrange and wonderful, the obſervation whereof hath cauſed them to be ſung by Poets, and copiouſly ſet forth in Romances, which are imitations of true Hiſtories.

Solus

Confess. lib. 3. *Solus amor est qui nomen difficultatis erubescit: It is Love alone that is ashamed to mention difficulty*, saith St. *Austin*. Nay, Love *welcomes* difficulties, and pleaseth it self in hard instances of obedience, because by them it sheweth forth more of its reality, strength and power: Easie and ordinary performances being but mean and short significations of a hearty love. And the greatest and bravest atchievements, such acts as are most heroick, as denying our selves in what is most dear to us, are the true and proper results and expressions of divine Love; these are the worthy exploits of this holy affection.

Love makes the noblest Champions in the *Holy War* against Sin, the World, and Satan, and animates a Christian to the greatest adventures. As for easie and common performances, ἀδάπανος εὐσέβεια, *a cheap and costless Religion*, and Self-denial in small matters, *viz.* in such things as a man is but little inclined to, and are less for his pleasure and advantage, the divine Love is less solicitous about *them*: But it chuseth rather to awaken and animate the Soul to the harder services of Religion. It doth not think it quitteth it self in engaging against the weaker lusts, or in taking some of the slight out-works, but it sets its self against

againſt the moſt powerful Corruptions, it plants its batteries againſt ὀχυρώματα, *the ſtrong holds*, the inmoſt Fort where Self-will hath enſconced her ſelf. *The weapons of its warfare are not carnal but mighty through God, to the pulling down of ſtrong holds, caſting down imaginations* (or reaſonings, λογισμὺς) *and every high thing that exalteth it ſelf againſt the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Chriſt.*

There is a lion in the way is the voice of the cold and lazy Sluggard, but this is no diſcouragement to the Lover of God, it affrights him not: Nay, ſo far is this Love from being cooled and diſheartned by difficulties and oppoſitions, that it is rather kindled and improved: By theſe it heightens it ſelf into an holy indignation againſt whatſoever would attempt to draw it from God. *Many waters cannot quench love; neither can the flouds drown it:* Nay, as water caſt into lime, they increaſe inſtead of leſſening its heat. Cant. viii. 6.

Love, though it be a ſoft and delicate affection, yet it is hardy and ſtrong withall: *Love is ſtrong as death*; and it is as ingenuous and noble as ſtrong: for *if a man would give all the ſubſtance of his houſe for love, it would utterly be contemned.* Neither Cant. viii. 7.

ther the hard and evil things which the world threatens, nor the most tempting allurements of the world or the flesh, can either affright or corrupt that heart, where the divine Love rules, from a faithful adhering to the will of God. But to the several temptations it meets with in the world, this is the constant resolute answer of every holy Lover, (as it was *Josephs*) *How can I do this wickedness and sin against God?*

Yea, Love enables a Christian to do his duty much sooner and better. That which is in others the effect of great severity to the body, long fastings and other toilsome exercises often repeated, is done in a more compendious and effectual way by the power of Love, in such Christians, as are indued with a more than ordinary measure of it.

Now that this Divine Love may be inkindled in us, and the flame of it more and more increased;

First, *Let us very often lift up the eyes of our mind, and fix them upon those infinitely lovely perfections, glories and excellencies that are in God, which the holy Scriptures do so abound with the mention and celebrations of.* Let us view these frequently in the Scriptures, and also in the works of Creation

ation and Providence. Let us often consider with our selves how that all the lovelinesses and sweetnesses that are in Creatures, are but so many drops from the fountain of them, that is God: and that every Love-attracting excellency, every thing which the world calls precious and desireable, is but a very weak resemblance of what is to be tasted and enjoyed in him.

Secondly, *Let us also as frequently contemplate those transcendent and invaluable mercies and favours, those numberless benefits and kindnesses which we stand obliged to God for.* And above all, that Gift of Gifts, his Son, in whom he expressed a Love to us *that passeth knowledge.*

Would we have the fire of holy Love kindled in our Breasts, let us, I say, dwell very much in the admiring contemplation of the Divine Excellencies, and the Divine Benefits.

The Contemplation of the infinite Perfections that are in God will render all things contemptible compared with him, and consequently make them weak, unperswading, untempting things.

What *Pythagoras* said he learned by his Philosophy, μηδὲν θαυμάζειν, *to admire nothing*, we shall learn by this Contemplation.

Videnti Deum omnis creatura eſt angusta. Dejecit ſe de culmine generoſitatis ſuæ, qui admirari aliquid poſt Deum poteſt. Cyprian de ſpectaculis.

on. When the Soul hath inured her ſelf to view the Divine Glories, how near to nothing is this, τὸ πᾶν, *the whole* Univerſe in its eyes, what a little ſpot and point? When ſhe hath been upon the Mount with God, and raviſhed her ſelf with his aſtoniſhing beauty, ſhe muſt needs be affected with ſuch a magnanimity and generoſity of ſpirit, as will couragiouſly repell the ſtrongeſt temptations ſhe meets with to withdraw her from a cloſe union and conjunction of will and affection to him.

And the conſideration of the innumerable and tranſcendent Bleſſings, we receive from God, will work in us ſuch an ingenuous gratitude, as will excite us to give up our hearts and our *all* to him.

The excellencies of his Nature, and the exceeding riches of his Bounty, will repreſent him as moſt worthy to be *known* νοῒ ἄνθει, *with the flower of our mind*, as *Zoroaſter* expreſſeth it, and our higheſt apprehenſions: And to be *loved* with the flower of our *hearts*; ſo that our ſweeteſt and deareſt affections will not be thought too precious for him.

Let us briefly reflect upon the power of *worldly* and ſenſual Love, and ſee what this will do.

Firſt,

Firſt, *The Love of Money.* How doth this oblige and inforce the men of this world to hard labours, dangerous adventures, anxious cares? To riſe early, ſit up late, eat the bread of ſorrows, to deny themſelves many of the comforts aud contents of this life, to fare hardly, and to live a toylſom and painful life; and in a word, (to uſe the Apoſtles phraſe) *to pierce themſelves through with many ſorrows?*

Secondly, *The Love of Honour, Dignities and Preferments.* How doth it put ambitious men upon reſtleſs labours, tedious attendances, ſervile offices, baſe flatteries and compliances? Such ſtick at nothing for the obtaining their ends, devote and ſurrender themſelves to the will and humour of their *Patron*, as if he were their God, and they *his* Creatures more than *God's*. They deport and addreſs themſelves to *him*, by whoſe favour they hope to be raiſed, in ſuch a form of reſpect and devotion, as approacheth near to that regard and reverence which is onely due to the moſt high God. So full of zeal and obſervance is this civil kind of Superſtition.

Thirdly, *The Love of Beauty.* What a ſtrange power and force hath it upon the fond man? To him no ſervices, no ſufferings ſeem grievous that his Miſtreſs wills him

him to undertake. With all ſubmiſſion and devotion he admires and adores this his Souls Idol, this Deity of Clay, and that in ſuch ſtrains, as blaſphemouſly reſemble that moſt affectionate and humble devotion which none but his Creator may challenge from him. He gives her his whole heart, and reſigns his whole will to her will, complies with all her humours, yields an entire obedience to all her commands, be they never ſo unreaſonable. He patiently ſuffers tedious delays and waitings, meekly bears her frowns, affronts and diſdains, her harſh language and hard uſage, and all the other arts ſhe hath of afflicting him; beſides the troubles and hazards he ſometimes meets with from his Rivals. This Love Bigot, ſuch is his devotion, neglects himſelf, his reſt, his food, his health, renounceth all his own contentments, and denies himſelf in whatſoever is for either his delight or advantage, if he underſtands it to be the pleaſure of his Miſtreſs: He mortifies himſelf, pines and conſumes, and is lean from day to day for her, as luſtful *Amnon* was for *Tamar*. Theſe, and ſuch like, are the *ſevere* Penances, Mortifications and Auſterities that this man is wont to undergo in this idolatrous *Love-ſervice:* yea, and ſometimes he ſacrificeth his very life,

life, which the poor wretch calleth Love's Martyrdom.

Here is Self-denial, *Self-Resignation* with a witness. With what a deal of pains and trouble doth this poor creature purchase to himself misery? With much more ease and less vexation, had his love been placed upon the best of objects, he might have been happy to eternity: He might have lived with God, who is Love it self, holy and unspotted Love, and reigned with Christ the faithful lover of his Soul in a Kingdom of peace and joy for ever.

By these instances we may discern the strange force of a degenerate and impure Love, and what a degree of Self-renunciation it forceth those to, in whom it reigns.

And is the Love of uncertain *Riches*, a little white and yellow Clay so powerful with men, and shall not the Love of the *true durable Riches*, the glorious Inheritance in Heaven, *which is incorruptible, and fadeth not away*, be more forceable?

Hath the Love of airy *Honour* such power, and shall not the Love *of that Honour which is from God*, that honour and glory that he hath promised *to every soul that worketh good*, that honour of *shining forth as the sun in the Kingdom of the Father*,

ther, ſhall not the love, I ſay, of ſuch inexpreſſible honour as this, have as powerful effects upon us, and much more powerful? Shall the Love of a fading Skin-beauty, the love of a little red and white, the love of withering Roſes, and Lillies and Violets, with which fond Lovers beſtick the Cheeks, and Hands and Veins of their Miſtreſſes, beſides I know not how many more ſuch gay embelliſhments of their fooliſh fancies; ſhall this impotent kind of love ſo potently command poor mortals, and ſhall not the Love of God do much more? who is αὐτοκαλον, the *firſt-fair* and original Beauty, as well as πρωτον ἀγαθον, the *firſt good*, whom Angels, the flower and top of the Creation, admire and adore with the greateſt complacency and ardor of affection.

Shall not Love fixed upon ſuch an object as this inflame us with an holy reſolution to undertake or undergo any thing for the fulfilling and ſatisfaction of his Will? Conſidering withall, that his Commands are (as hath been ſhewn) in *themſelves* moſt reaſonable, moſt fit to be approved and obſerved by us, agreeable to the dignity of our Souls, in their own nature moſt lovely, excellent and worthy, and have moreover a mighty recompence of

of reward; which cannot be said of the Commands of Lust, and sensual impure Love, but the perfectly contrary; they being most vain and foolish, unreasonable and cruel, and obedience to them of most pernicious and sad consequence.

Nor is there any thing that God would have us part withall, but what it is better for us to be without; better for our ease, peace and pleasure, and more for our liberty to be freed and disintangled from: As hath been already proved.

And so I pass to that other branch of this Direction, *viz.* that we should labour to be affected with a strong and ardent Love, as of *God*, so of *Divine things*: of Vertue and Holiness, the impressions of the Divine Image upon the Soul.

Had we a worthy resentment of Spiritual Excellencies, and a due sense of the beauty of Holiness, they would even ravish our hearts, and *mirabiles amores excitare, excite in us strange and wonderful affections to them*, (as *Tully* speaks of Vertue) and consequently secure us from the allurements and attractions of any earthly vanity whatsoever.

But till a man comes to admire and be enamoured with the Divine Graces and Vertues, every thing will be ready to get

his heart which gratifieth ſenſuality, and to carry him away captive.

By one unacquainted with the lovelineſs of Holineſs will the leaſt twinkling of this worlds glory be admired; but there can be no better way to put by and fruſtrate the attempts and temptations of the *things below*, than to be well acquainted and greatly affected with the *things above*, the things that are Holy, Heavenly, and Divine.

That of *Plutarch* was a moſt true and excellent obſervation, οὐ μὲν οἷον ἐπαύσασθαι ζηλοῦντας, &c. *It is impoſſible for men not to have a great affection and ambition for the things which the world admires and purſues, except there be a principle within them to admire vertue, whoſe alone beauty and luſtre would darken and put out all other glories, and gayeties whatſoever.*

Be fully poſſeſt then with the importance of this truth, that the moſt ſoveraign way for a man to take off his mind and heart from the admired vanities of this world, and conſequently *to deny himſelf*, is plainly this: To turn his mind and affections to better objects, to admire the uncreated and original beauty, and to have an high eſteem of the participations and impreſſions thereof.

The

The affections will not be ſtopt or pent in, they will run out upon ſomething; let them therefore iſſue forth, but let it be to the nobleſt objects, let them ſtream forth freely, but, to better things. There is ſuch a way approved by Phyſicians for the ſtopping of bloud, *viz.* When it iſſueth out one way, to open a vein elſewhere, and ſo to ſtay it by revulſion, and diverting the courſe.

Nor is that Fable of the Poet unfit to be applied here, as containing an excellent Moral, which tells us the beſt means of defeating the *Syrens*, the moſt dangerous temptations of the world. *Ulyſſes* and his Companions ſtopt their ears with wax, as they ſailed by, that they might not hear them, and ſo avoided the danger: But *Orpheus*, by ſinging divine Hymns, by celebrating the praiſes of God, and recounting his Excellencies and Favours, is ſaid to have overcome them, which was the more noble way of Conqueſt.

But to prevent all miſtake and ſcruple, I adde that what hath been ſaid doth not imply that a Chriſtian is to dam and ſtop up his affections from iſſuing out to any thing here in this world: But thus we are to conſider.

There are undue and forbidden, and there are due and allowed objects of the affections.

Now as for *undue* objects, the pleasures of any kind of sin, the things which God expresly forbids in the Holy Scriptures, we are to have no affection at all for, but the greatest antipathy against. There must not be the least tasting of the forbidden Tree, though its fruit be never so fair and tempting.

But as for *due* objects of the affections, and such as God allows, our care must be that they be carried forth towards them in a due order, and a due degree.

First, *in a due order.* Our Love must first be placed upon God and Christ, his Kingdom and his Righteousness, and thence descend to inferiour good things. Things Divine must have the precedency and priority in our care and endeavours, according to that advice of our Saviour, *Matth.* vi. 33.

Secondly, *In a due degree and measure.* God and the things above must be most desired, loved and delighted in. *Whom* (saith the Psalmist) *have I in heaven but thee, and there is none on earth I can desire in comparison of thee*, Psalm lxxiii. 25. God alloweth us to give a lesser love to the lesser good-

goodneſs; but the higheſt affection is to be given to the Higheſt and Original Goodneſs.

I will conclude this Direction with the agreeing advice of *Taulerus* in his eighth Epiſtle: *Omnem diem inter amiſſos deputate, in quo, Dei amore propriam non fregiſtis voluntatem. Account that day as miſpent and loſt, wherein you have not ſubdued your own will by the Love of God.*

This advice imports two things.

Firſt, That a Chriſtian is to make this great Duty of *Self-Reſignation* his daily buſineſs; that 'tis a leſſon which he is to be every day learning, and an Exerciſe in which he is to make continual progreſs.

Secondly, That *the Love of God* is of moſt ſoveraign force and virtue to break and ſubdue a mans own will.

CHAP. VII.

That Humility is a powerful means to the attaining of Self-Resignation, where it is particularly shewn, how it is effectual thereunto both as it implieth obedience to God's Commands, and as it implies patient submission to his disposals.

VII. SEventhly, Endeavour after the deepest humility, and sink thy self into the greatest Self-nothingness, if thou wouldst be truly resigned to the Will of God. Humility is a most powerful and excellent means to the attaining of *Self-Resignation*, both as it implies obedience to God's Commands, and submission to his disposals.

First, *As it implies Obedience to the Commands of God.* The humble Christian cannot think much of doing any thing God requires of him, or forbearing any thing he forbids him: for,

First, He considers that there is an unconceiveable infinite distance between God and him. That God is infinite in Essence and all Perfections, in Glory and Majesty: That he is the Lord of all things, the Sove-

raign

raign of Men and Angels, and therefore 'tis most fit that he should have the preheminence in all things; and most disbecoming *him* to oppose his Will when he commands things never so ungrateful to flesh and bloud.

And he considers also that himself is a limited, dependent, indigent Being, that he is nothing but what he is by God, and can have nothing but what comes from him; and consequently, that 'tis the most unreasonable thing in the world, that his Will should ever take place of the Will of God. The infinite Superiority of God's Being most justly and plainly infers the precedency and superiority of his Will.

He considers that God is the inexhaustible Fountain of Life, the great Ocean of Being, whence all the Rivers of particular Beings flow, and whither they return again; whereas man is a poor, feeble Creature, *altogether vanity*, and that *at his best estate*, (as the *Psalmist* speaks) *even all the nations of the earth are counted but as a drop of the bucket, or small dust of the ballance*, (as *Isaiah* speaks) *nay, they are all as nothing before God, and are counted to him less than nothing*. What then shall we think of each particular man, he being so inconsiderable a part of that *drop*, that *dust*, that *nothing*,

Psal. 39. 5.

Chap. xl. 15.

Ver. 17.

thing, and *leſs than nothing*. The humble Chriſtian, I ſay, hath a due ſenſe of his unconceiveably vaſt and infinite diſproportion and diſparity to God; and thence concludes, that nothing can be ſo unreaſonable as to expect his will ſhould be humoured, or to take it ill to have it croſt by the Will of God.

He is deeply ſenſible that nothing is ſo intolerable, as for the will and pleaſure of a creature in any thing to controul and overrule the Lord of Life and Glory, the Father of the Univerſe, the great Maker and Preſerver of all things, and therefore that it is much more, the greateſt petulancy, the vileſt ſaucineſs, and moſt horrible preſumption for ſuch a Creature as himſelf to diſpute and quarrel with the Divine Commands.

Secondly, The humble Chriſtian conſiders alſo, that God, being Self-happy and Self-ſufficient, cannot deſign his own advantage in laying his Commands upon us; that we are not able to gratifie him by any ſervice, but, being infinitely good, he aims at our benefit in ſo doing: That God in the buſineſs of Religion, and the precepts he requires our obſervance of, ſeeks not his own, but meerly *our* intereſt and welfare; in that, I ſay, he needs not, nor is capable of receiving any additions of happineſs,

pineſs, much leſs from without himſelf, and therefore he gratifieth, and means kindneſs to, us in all his Commands; and his Laws are to be numbred among his *Favours*, even his moſt *endearing* and *obliging* ones. And he who is thus aſſured muſt needs be ſtrongly excited to perform a moſt hearty, ingenuous and chearful obedience to all the declarations of the Divine Will.

Secondly, *Humility fits and enables us for Reſignation, as it alſo imparts patient Submiſſion to all God's Diſpoſals:* And that,

Firſt, *Upon the ſame account that we now ſaid it diſpoſeth to active Obedience; Namely, becauſe it makes us ſenſible of the infinite diſproportion that is between God and us*; the conſideration of which will neceſſarily convince us, that it becomes ſuch deſpicable Creatures as we are, to humble our ſelves under his mighty hand, to lay our ſelves down in the duſt before him, inſtead of fretting and repining at his Providence.

Secondly, *Humility diſpoſeth to Patience, as it will make us ſenſible of our moral defects and imperfections, our ſins and tranſgreſſions, whereby we are become obnoxious to God's diſpleaſure.* The ſenſe whereof will force us to acknowledge that he is moſt righteous whenſoever he puniſheth, and therefore we ſhould *accept of the puniſhment of our iniquity.* Mur-

Murmuring and complaining thoughts ariſe from Pride, and a too good opinion of our ſelves: 'Tis *Self-conceit* that makes us miſconſtrue any of God's dealings as over-rigorous and harſh towards us. but to the humble man, who is ſenſible of his manifold miſcarriages, they appear moſt juſt, right and equal, nay, very *gentle* too, in compariſon of his deſerts.

He having a deep ſenſe of the Evil of Sin, how unreaſonable, unjuſt, and diſingenuous, and therefore how unſpeakably hainous a thing it is to oppoſe the Will of the moſt High God, the Supream Governour of the World, and Judge of all the Earth, to offend infinite Goodneſs, and to return evil to him from whom we have always received good, and to whom our Engagements are inexpreſſibly many and great; I ſay, the humble Chriſtian having a great ſenſe of this, and being conſcious to himſelf that he hath been this unreaſonable, unrighteous, and diſingenuous Creature, will under the ſharpeſt afflictions he can ſuffer in this world, ſay with *Ezra: Thou haſt puniſhed me leſs than mine iniquities do deſerve.*

Thirdly, *Humility diſpoſeth to Submiſſive bearing afflictions, as it will make us ſenſible of the exceeding ſhortneſs of our underſtandings,*

ings, our great folly and utter diſability to fathom God's Counſels, and the reaſons of his Providences. The Humble Chriſtian will cry out with the bleſſed Apoſtle, *O the depth of the riches both of the wiſdom and knowledge of God, how unſearchable are his judgments, and his ways paſt finding out!* He knows that infinite and unſearchable Wiſdom muſt needs adminiſter the affairs of the world in general, and of every perſon in particular, in the beſt and wiſeſt way, and therefore that there is very great reaſon for whatſoever ſufferings he undergoes, although they may ſeem to his ſhallow capacity to be never ſo unreaſonable.

Murmuring at any of the Divine Providences is a tacit charging of God, as with *unrighteouſneſs*, ſo with *folly*, and a ſetting up our Wiſdom above God's.

Fourthly, *The Humble Chriſtian is likewiſe ſenſible of the great need he hath of afflictions.* That he needs them as Medicines to cure his ſpiritual Maladies, that they are needful as they are preventions of Sin, and ſecure againſt many temptations, and as they are very inſtructive; much of God and himſelf being to be learnt in the School of the Croſs.

This man knoweth, that not to be corrected

rected in order to his amendment is the greateſt of puniſhments; and that no judgment is ſo dreadful as ſin it ſelf, and to be given up to an hard heart and ſeared conſcience; and therefore he accounts thoſe ſtraits, troubles and difficulties, he ever and anon meets with, as expreſſions of God's unwillingneſs he ſhould undo himſelf.

It is moſt certain that the Holy, Wiſe and Good God doth not directly and primarily will puniſhment, (as neither doth any good and wiſe Law-giver) to do thus is not juſtice but cruelty: Nor doth he deſire the occaſions of inflicting puniſhments, *viz.* the tranſgreſſion of his Laws. Juſtice is wiſe and good, it hath ever the beſt of ends, namely the diſcountenancing and preventing of ſin and evil, and the cheriſhing and encouragement of goodneſs, and ſecuring the authority of righteous Laws. And the humble perſon conſidering that God's deſign in afflicting him is to cure the greater evil of ſin, by the leſſer of ſuffering, and that afflictions are ſo neceſſary, as that he is ſeldom long well without them, by this means is he the better enabled quietly to ſubmit when he ſuffers under them.

Laſtly,

Lastly, *Humility enables a Christian both to Obedience and Patience, as it makes him capable of more grace:* And the more grace the more power he hath both to do and suffer the Will of God. *Surely* (saith the Wise man) *he scorneth the scorners, but he giveth grace to the lowly*, Prov. iii. 34. And St. *Peter* 1 Epistle v. 5. *God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble.* And again St. *James*, Chap. iv. 5, 6. *The Spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy, but he giveth more grace, wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.*

The high mountains are barren, but the low valleys are covered over with Corn, and the showers of God's grace fall into lowly hearts and humble souls. The more poor in spirit, the more self-empty, the more earnestly desirous of spiritual things, and such shall be filled, according to Christ's promise, *Matth.* v. 6. *Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.*

You know the story in 2 *Kings* 4 chap. So long as the Widdow had an empty Vessel the Oyl flowed, but when there was not another to be gotten, it immediately stayed. And so long as God seeth an empty soul that is ready to receive and desirous

rous of his grace, he is ready to communicate of his fulneſs to it.

A Soul that is poor in its own eyes, void of ſelf-glorying and acknowledging its own indigence, and withall its utter unworthineſs to receive any the leaſt favour from the Divine Bounty is ſuch a one as God looks for, to communicate more and more of his Grace and Spirit to. *To this man will I look*, (ſaith God) *even to him that is poor and of a contrite ſpirit*, &c. And *thus ſaith the high and lofty one that inhabiteth eternity, whoſe name is Holy, I dwell in the high and holy place; with him alſo that is of a contrite and humble ſpirit, to revive the ſpirit of the humble, and to revive the ſpirit of the contrite ones*, Iſaiah lvii. 15.

Iſaiah lxvi. 2.

Humility diſpoſeth to gratitude, and gratitude fits us to receive more from God; for a grateful Soul will ſet a high value upon his bleſſings, and moſt gladly give him the glory of his grace. The humble Chriſtian thinks himſelf, with *Jacob*, leſs than the leaſt of all God's mercies, and conſequently he will be heartily thankful for the leaſt; and by being thus affected, he becomes meet for the greateſt, and therefore cannot fail of it.

It is to be obſerved, that when *Jacob* was in this humble and ſelf-abaſing temper,

per, it was that he ſaw God *face to face* at *Peniel:* Then it was that he was honoured with the name *Iſrael*, and *as a Prince had power with God and men, and prevailed.*

But on the contrary, Pride and Self-fulneſs, which is ever accompanied with unthankfulneſs, makes men uncapable of receiving the Divine Grace: And therefore the *Phariſees*, who *gloried in themſelves that they were righteous, and deſpiſed others*, that were not ſick but whole and healthy in their own conceit, died of their diſeaſes, notwithſtanding the great Phyſician of Souls was ſo long among them.

Now there are two graces that Humility gives a peculiar fitneſs for, two of the firſt magnitude and greateſt influence, of the greateſt uſe and conſequence in a Chriſtians life, *viz.* The *Love of God*, and *Faith* or *Truſt in him.*

'Tis evident that Humility hath a peculiar fitneſs to cheriſh and increaſe the grace of *Love*, for the more ſenſible any one is of his great unworthineſs and ill-deſervings, the more he muſt needs love God for having ſo gracious a regard to him, the more will he admire and adore the riches of his Grace.

And 'tis as evident that Humility affordeth the like advantage for the Grace of *Faith*, or truſt in God; for the more ſenſible a Chriſtian is of his own impotence, the more will he rely upon the Divine Power and Goodneſs for the ſupply of his wants, having ſo many promiſes to encourage him. The ſenſe of our own weakneſs will make us diſtruſt our ſelves, the more we diſtruſt our ſelves, the more ſhall we ſtay our Souls on God, and confide in his Wiſdom, Power, and Grace.

Now we have particularly ſhewn, of how great efficacy both theſe Vertues are to enable us to this Duty of *Self-Reſignation.*

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

That the ſerious obſervation of the great Examples of Self-Reſignation, which are recorded in the Scriptures, is of great uſe and advantage: And firſt of the Example of ABRAHAM.

VIII. EIghthly, Look to thoſe lively Patterns and Examples of *Self-Reſignation* ſet before us in the Holy Scriptures. Theſe are of ſingular uſe and advantage to be ſeriouſly conſidered: For they plainly ſhew this holy diſpoſition of ſpirit to be attainable, and that God requires herein nothing of us that is impoſſible.

Could *they* do thus, and cannot *we* by the ſame divine help and power do the like, which we have ſhewn is attainable *by us* as well as *them*? They were ὁμοιοπαθεῖς, *ſubject to like paſſions with us*; they were fleſh and bloud as we are, and naturally as weak and infirm as our ſelves, and God is the ſame in Power and Goodneſs now that ever he was.

And this may commend to us the fulneſs of the Scriptures, that beſides the beſt

Precepts and Rules, we have the beſt Patterns and Examples recorded in them of every grace and virtue: So that by the guidance and aſſiſtance of the Holy Spirit, the Chriſtian man *may be perfected, throughly furniſhed unto every good work.*

The beſt Rules of the beſt life are laid down in the divinely inſpired Writings, and they are plain and intelligible, eſpecially to thoſe that have the *good and honeſt heart*; but Examples ſuperadded to Rules, and Patterns to Precepts, make both more inſtructive, and as well *encourage* as *direct* our Practice. And we having a many worthy Examples upon record of this *Self-Reſignation*, the Leſſon becomes neither too high nor hard for us to underſtand or practice.

How many Precepts have we in Scripture to engage us to Chaſtity and Purity, Meekneſs and Patience, Faith and Charity, to an holy reſolvedneſs in owning of God, and adhering to his ways, and unweariedneſs in doing good, and to every other grace and virtue?

And have we not, beſides others, the Example of *Joſeph* for Chaſtity, *Moſes* for Meekneſs, *Job* for Patience, *Abraham* for Faith, *Dorcas* and *Cornelius* for Charity, *Daniel* for an holy reſolvedneſs of ſpirit in

in owning God, S. *Paul* for an unwearied Zeal, and above all, that Example of all Examples for every thing that is holy, pure and lovely, our Lord Jeſus Chriſt?

Take we heed then that we be not found *ingentium exemplorum parvi imitatores*, *ſmall imitators of mighty examples*, as *Salvian* expreſſeth it. But let it be our ſerious care and holy ambition to tranſcribe their vertues, to write after thoſe fair Copies they have ſet us, to be followers of thoſe bleſſed Souls wherein they were followers of God and Chriſt.

But our preſent argument determining us to *Self-Reſignation*, let us conſider ſome Examples hereof for our guidance and encouragement.

Firſt, I will preſent you with that of *Abraham*, *Faithful Abraham*, as he is ſtiled by the Apoſtle St. *Paul*. There were ten trials wherewith God was pleaſed to exerciſe this good man, as they are collected out of his Story by the *Hebrew* Writers: The firſt and laſt of which ten were the ſoreſt of all.

The firſt was his being called and commanded of God, *Geneſis* the twelfth, to leave his own Countrey, his Houſe and Lands, his Friends and Kindred, and to go to a place he knew not.

This Command as unpleasant and grievous as it must needs have been to his flesh and bloud, he did not in the least demurr upon obeying: But *by Faith Abraham when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed, and he went out, not knowing whither he went*, Heb. xi. 8.

The last was his being commanded to take his onely Son *Isaac*, and to slay and offer him for a Burnt-offering, than which there could not be a greater trial.

We have the Command in *Genesis* xxii.2. every word of which hath a singular Emphasis, and deserves attention.

Take now thy son, thine onely son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah, and offer him there for a burnt-offering, upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.

Take now thy Son------Not a *Beast* for Sacrifice, not any of the best of his great store of Cattle, but his *Son*.

Take him *now*, forthwith, without any delay *.

Thy Son *Isaac:* Not *Ishmael* but *Isaac*, his and his Mothers *delight* and *joy*, as the name signifies.

Thine *onely* Son: He and *Sarah* had no other to solace themselves in, nor were they

* נָא is the same here with עַתָּה saith *Aben Ezra*.

they ever like to have any other.

And beſides there is another obſervable thing mentioned *Heb.* xi. 27. *He that had received the promiſes offered up his onely begotten Son, of whom it was ſaid, that in Iſaac ſhall thy ſeed be called.*

Whom thou *loveſt:* That is, very *dearly* and *paſſionately*, as being the Son of their old age, their onely Son, and a Son of the promiſe. Theſe two go together, *tender* and *the onely one*, Prov. iv. 3. *The onely one* and *the choice one*, Cant. vi. 9. To loſe the *onely* Son is that which cauſeth bitter lamentation; and the mourning for ſuch a one is uſed to expreſs the moſt paſſionate and doleful mourning, *Amos* viii. 10. *Zech.* xii. 10. *Jer.* vi. 26.

-------And get thee into the land of Moriah, and offer him there. Abraham himſelf muſt offer him, he might not command his two ſervants to do it; and they went no farther than till they came within ſight of the place where he was to be offered.

The tender Father muſt take his *onely Son, whom he loved*, and bind him with his own hands upon the Altar, and take the knife to ſlay him. As his eyes muſt behold him bleeding, and gaſping, and burning, ſo muſt he be himſelf the Executioner.

-----*And offer him there for a burnt-offering, on one of the mountains, which I will tell thee of.* This was the place where the Temple was to be built by *Solomon*, the place of offering Sacrifices.

And it was three days journey from *Abraham*'s habitation, which might make the Command yet more grievous. As often as in that journey he looked upon the Wood, or Fire for burning the Sacrifice, or the Knife that must do the Execution, or the place where it was to be done, which he saw afar off, how could it be otherwise but that his eye must most deeply affect his heart.

It follows ver. vi. *And Abraham took the wood of the burnt-offering and laid it upon Isaac his Son, and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife, and they went both of them together.* What an affecting and heart-piercing sight was this! And herein was *Isaac* a Figure of our Blessed Saviour, who bare the wood of the Cross upon his Shoulders, whereon he was to be offered up for a Sacrifice to God.

And it is hence to be concluded, that *Isaac* was now no Child or weak Stripling, in that he was able to travel with so great a burden; such a quantity of wood as was sufficient to burn his body to ashes could

could be no ſmall weight. *Joſephus* makes *Iſaac* to be now twenty five years old, but an *Hebrew* Tradition, about thirty and three. If ſo, (and for what end ſhould they feign it?) he was in *this* circumſtance alſo a Figure of our Saviour, who was offered up at about the ſame age.

Now *Iſaac* being at this time grown up to a good age and ſtrength, it might make his Father the more unwilling to part with him, and conſiderably added to the greatneſs of his Trial.

The word נַעַר is uſed of one that is of an adult age, as of *Joſhua*, Exod. xxxiii. 11. when about 53 years old; of *Benjamin*, when he was 30 years old, *Gen.* xliii. 8. and of *Joſeph*, when about 28 years old: And the two young men accompanying them are called alſo נְעָרִים So that it ſhould be rendred the *young man*, not *Lad*.

And thoſe words of *Iſaac* which he ſpake in a ſtrain of ſweet innocence and ſimplicity, v. 7. *My Father, behold the fire and the wood, but where is the Lamb for a Burnt-offering?* they muſt needs cauſe a great colluctation within him, and yerning of bowels: No doubt *Abraham*'s affections did ſtrangely work now, and he was pained at the very heart.

There is one thing more which we may take notice of in this Command of God, it is ſaid, *Offer him there for a Burnt-offering*; לְעֹלָה: This kind of Offering was an Holo-

Holocauſt, all of which was to be conſumed by fire, ſo that there was not the leaſt Relick to remain of him.

This was the Command, and was it not a moſt difficult one? could there have been a ſorer trial? But, behold the ſignal Reſignation and Obedience of *Abraham* to the Will of God! He without the leaſt delay or demurring, betook himſelf to the performance of the divine pleaſure. It is ſaid v. 3. that *Abraham roſe up early in the morning:* it is like the Command came ſecretly to him in a dream, or viſion of the night, and *at or before the firſt peep of day, he addreſſed himſelf to obey it. Thus he denied his natural and very great affection to his Son, and gave a moſt illuſtrious proof, that nothing was ſo dear to him, nothing ſo powerful with him as the Will of God: *Wiſdom kept him ſtrong againſt his tender compaſſion towards his ſon,* ſaith the Author of the Book of Wiſdom, *chap.* x. 5.

וַיַּשְׁכֵּם בַּבֹּקֶר *manicavit diluculo*, or as the vulgar Latine, *ſurrexit de nocte.*

The completion of his Obedience is ſet forth in the ninth verſe: *And Abraham built an Altar in the place which God told him of, and laid the wood in order, and bound Iſaac his Son, and laid him on the Altar upon the wood.*

By

By the way, not onely *Abraham*, but *Isaac* too, was herein a rare example of Resignation: He was doubtless, (as appears by what was said of his age and strength) able to have resisted his Father now stricken in years, but he expressed no reluctancy, he quietly and meekly suffered himself to be bound, and laid upon the Altar. And herein again (as in several other particulars) was he a Figure of our Saviour, who, though he could have rescued himself from the power of the Jews and Romans, yet permitted them to take and bind him, to heap a many vile indignities upon him, and at last to nail him to his Cross.

To those words, *they went both of them together*, v. viii. the *Jerusalem Targum* addes תַּמִּים וּבְלֵב *with a just and upright heart*; and *Jonathan* בְּלִבָּא שְׁלִים וּם with a quiet, humble & submiss heart. Yea, both the *Targum* of *Jerusalem*, and *Jonathan Ben-Uziel*, make *Isaac* speak to *Abraham*, that he would bind him strongly, and then meekly and quietly to offer himself to become a Sacrifice.

And then it follows, ------*And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his Son:* This God accounted to him as if he had done it; because he was fully purposed in his mind to do it, and had it not been for God's interposition, had performed his purpose. Therefore the Scripture reports it as if he had actually offered up his Son: Heb. xi. 17. *By faith Abraham when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and*

completa voluntas pro facto æstimatur.

and he that had received the promiſes offered up his onely begotten Son. And James ii. 21. *Was not Abraham our Father juſtified by works, when he had offered Iſaac his Son upon the Altar?* And hereupon (as it follows ver. 23.) *he was called the friend of God.* He eminently approved him as ſuch for this high act of obedience. This is a title thrice given him in Scripture, in this place, in 2 *Chron.* xx. 7. and *Eſay* xli. 8. and implied in *Gen.* xviii. 17. *Shall I hide from Abraham the thing that I do?* Where *Philo* addes τῷ φίλῳ μου, Shall I hide from *Abraham my friend.* And by this Periphraſis *the friend of God*, without any mention of his name, is he deſcribed in the *Alcoran* the *Turks* Bible.

I will conclude this great Example of Reſignation with that in *Eſay* xli. 2. *who raiſed up the righteous man from the Eaſt, and called him to his foot: Abraham* was ſequacious, and obeyed God in all things; he had him at his call, as the Faulconer hath a well man'd Hawk, and calls her to his hand.

And ſhall not the Spiritual Seed of *Abraham*, for ſo Chriſtians are, be ſequacious and obſervant of every call of God, though he call them to ſuch trials as are very difficult and ungrateful? *Let us walk in*

in the ſteps, of the faith and obedience, *of our Father Abraham*, in readily ſacrificing our *Iſaac*, our *delight* and *joy*, that ſin which is moſt beloved, *the ſin of our ſouls*, (as the phraſe is *Micah* vi. 7.) which ſeems to bring us moſt profit, and moſt delight and pleaſure. By thus doing ſhall we be owned as the eſpecial Friends and Favorites of God, as *Abraham* was, and receive the reward of ſuch, as he did.

CHAP. IX.

Of the Example of Job.

IX. SEecondly, The next Example of *Self-Reſignation* ſhall be that of upright and holy *Job:* And he will appear to be a moſt memorable and eminent one, by theſe following Particulars.

Firſt, *He was a Great man:* Great for *Eſtate* and *Riches.* We read that he had ſeven thouſand Sheep, three thouſand Camels, five hundred yoke of Oxen, five hundred She-Aſſes, and very great ſtore of Servants: That he was the greateſt of all the men of the Eaſt, that is of *Arabia*, which lay Eaſtward from the Land of *Canaan.* He was great for *Wiſdom*, and by that means for *Honour* and *Eſteem:* of which there is a particular account, Chap. xxix. *The aged men when they ſaw him aroſe and ſtood up*, ver. 8. *The Princes refrained talking, and laid their hand upon their mouth; the Nobles held their peace, and their tongue cleaved to the roof of their mouth*, ver. 9, 10. Such a reverence had they for him, for the greatneſs of his Wiſdom and excellent accompliſhments, that *the ear that heard*

Job i. 3.

heard him bleſſed him, ver. 11. *All gave ear to him, and waited and kept ſilence at his counſel: After his words they ſpake not again, his ſpeeches dropped upon them, and they waited for him as for the rain, and opened their mouth wide as for the latter rain*, ver. 22. 23. They received his diſcourſe as a welcome and moſt deſireable rain, and ſuch eſpecially was מלקוש the *latter* rain, before Harveſt, for making the Corn more plump and fair.

Secondly, He was as *Good* as Great and *Honourable*. Such was his *Humility*, that he did not *deſpiſe the cauſe of his man-ſervant or maid-ſervant, when they contended with him*, Chap. xxxi. 13.

His *Sobriety* and *Moderation* of ſpirit is to be ſeen, v. 25. *&c.*

His *Charity* and *Compaſſion*, Chap. xxix. 13, 15, 16. Chap. xxx. 25. Chap. xxxi. 16, 17, 19, 20, 32.

His great *Chaſtity*, Chap. xxxi. 1, 9. So far was he from making his great Eſtate to ſerve Senſuality and Luſt.

His *Integrity* and *Honeſty*, Ch. xxix. 14. Chap. xxxi, 7, 38, 39.

His *readineſs to employ his power and intereſt for the relief*, and not for the cruſhing, *of oppreſſed Innocents*, Ch. xxix. 12. Ch. xxxi. 21. And this he did boldly and reſolvedly, Ch. xxxi. 34.

His

His *exemplary Piety in keeping himself from the Idolatries of the Arabians*, Ch. xxxi. 26, 27. *His pious ſollicitude for his Children*, in their yearly Feaſtings, leſt they might have offended God in the heat of their Banquets, Chap. i. 5. And Chap. x xiii. 11, 12. we have him expreſſing the great devotion of his Soul towards God, in the *conſtancy* and *univerſality* of his Obedience. *My foot* (ſaith he) *hath held his ſteps, his way have I kept, and not declined, neither have I gone back from the commandment of his lips: I have eſteemed the words of his mouth more than my neceſſary food.*

And God himſelf gives this character of *Job*, Chap. ii. 3. *That there was none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and eſcheweth evil.*

Thus was this excellent Perſon a great Pattern of all kinds of Vertue in his flouriſhing eſtate, and he was no leſs a Pattern of *Self-Reſignation* in his afflictions and trials: For

Thirdly, This Great and Good man was ſorely *afflicted and tried by God.* There were three Meſſengers that brought him the tidings of ſad Calamities that befell him in his Poſſeſſions; his Oxen, Aſſes, Sheep and Camels, with his Servants being carri-

carried away by the *Sabeans* and *Chaldeans*, or consumed by fire from heaven. But the fourth Messenger brings the heaviest news of all, *viz.* That all his Sons and Daughters were crusht to pieces by the fall of the house wherein they were feasting.

This was dismal indeed, to lose all his Children at once, and that not by a natural but violent death, and to have them destroyed with such a sudden destruction, and that also in the midst of their feasting and mirth.

But besides, the more to aggravate his affliction, these several Messengers came immediately one after another, while one was speaking another came in; one wave, the more to overwhelm him, came upon the neck of the other; so that he had no respite, no time to concoct his sorrows, no diversion, no time of breathing to prepare himself to bear the next.

But after all this, affliction comes nearer still and more close to him. God permitted Satan to exercise his cruelty upon his *Body*, which was stricken with sore boyls, and that all over, even from the crown of his head to the sole of his foot, Chap. ii. 7. He was full of anguish in every part*. There was nothing about him left whole

* The word for boiles in

and entire but the *skin of his teeth*, Chap. xix. 20. or the skin about his gums or lips: nothing was whole about him but his mouth to complain with. To have one such bile is very painful, but to have such angry, and noisome things all over the body, how exquisitely tormenting must it needs be?

this place is שְׁחִין which signifieth *burning* biles, from the *Chaldee* שְׁחַן *to be hot.* They were inflaming ulcers.

But here is added also רָע *sore* or *malignant* biles.

And in this sad plight *he sate down* (not on an easie Couch or soft Bed, but) *among the ashes*, v. 8. or upon a Dunghil without the city, as the *Septuagint* hath it*: Where he had none to dress his sores but himself, nor any thing (that we read of) to help himself with, but some piece of earthen vessel cast on the Dunghill. Instead of using Oyls and Salves that were proper for the mitigation of his pain, and the healing his Sores, he scraped them, or squeezed out the raging matter of them, *with a potsherd.* He was so changed by his blains and botches, and in so squalid a condition, that his *Friends knew him not*, Chap. ii. 12. *His Brethren went far from him, and his acquaintance were estranged from him, his kinsfolk failed him, and his familiar friends for-*

* ὀπὶ τῆς κοπρείας ἔξω τῆς πόλεως.

got

got him; they that dwelt in his houſe, and his maids counted him for a ſtranger, he was an alien in their ſight. He called his ſervant, and he gave him no anſwer, he intreated him with his mouth. His breath was ſtrange to his wife, though he entreated for the Childrens ſake of his body. The young Children deſpiſed him and ſpake againſt him: His inward friends abhorred him, and thoſe whom he loved were turned againſt him: as he moſt pathetically complains, Chap. xix.

His three Friends, *Eliphaz*, *Bildad* and *Zophar*, when they firſt came to ſee him, ſate down upon the ground ſeven days and nights, and could not ſpeak for aſtoniſhment at ſo ſtrange a ſpectacle; and what they afterwards ſpake was both impertinent and highly uncharitable: inſtead of giving him any relief it added more to his grief, and aggravated his torment. *They were Phyſicians of no value*, and *miſerable comforters*, as *Job* told them. Ch. xiii. 4. Ch. xvi. 2.

And whereas he might have hoped that the Wife of his boſom, ſhe to whom he had been ſo true and faithful, (Ch.xxxi.9.) might have been ſome comfort to him, ſhe on the contrary was not onely eſtranged from him, but alſo a diſheartner of his patience, and aſſiſted *Satan* in his deſigns againſt him. Satan had touched his bones

and his flesh, but that speech of his Wife,
Ch. 2. 9. *Dost thou still retain thine integrity? Curse God and die*, must needs smite him to the heart.

And now have I not set before you a sad and most pitiable condition, full of such difficult circumstances as might be apt, any one of them, to make the duty of quiet submission to the Will of God, very hard and grievous? For this rich and wealthy man to lose all his Estate, and that Estate which he had done so much good with, by acts of mercy and pity; and together with his Estate, all his ten Children by one sudden stroke: For this great and honourable Person to be brought so low as to sit upon an Ash-heap, to be debased to a Dunghill: For this so greatly reverenced and esteemed person, and that had been so humble in the heighth of his Honours, and employed his power for the relief of the oppressed, to be now the object of the greatest contempt, and vilified by the most vile: For so good a man, that feared God and eschued evil, to be delivered up to the malice of the Devil, who would be sure not to spare him, but to lay on hard enough: For such a man, I say, to be thus lamentably afflicted both by men and devils, foes and *friends* too, and not

not to have ſo much as one comfort left him, who can ſufficiently ſet forth the pitifulneſs of this caſe? The Scriptures mention *Job*'s Wealth, Greatneſs, and Goodneſs, that the greatneſs of his ſufferings, and his patient ſubmiſſion might the more appear.

For one that had but *little* before, to loſe that, that was low before, to fall lower, is not ſo ſharp a trial, as from poſſeſſing a great abundance, to be deprived of all, and that at once, to be immediately brought out of the extream of Proſperity into the extream of Adverſity.

Had he by a riotous courſe, like the Prodigal in the Goſpel, brought himſelf to ſtreights; or had he by ſome hainous ſin provoked the Almighty to inflict upon him ſome ſore judgement, he had had no ſuch trial of patience, but might thank himſelf for what was come upon him: But for one who had always kept a conſcience void of offence both towards God and men, that walked in all the Commandments of God with a perfect and upright heart, to be ſo ſtrangely and fearfully plagued, what a trial is here!

But Behold now *Job*'s Reſignation, and Submiſſion to the Will of God, it was great to admiration, as great as his ſufferings.

As soon as the last Messenger had delivered the heaviest tidings of all the four, (for they came, as was said, so thick one upon another, that he had not time to say any thing before, the latter coming while the former was yet speaking) I say the last had no sooner brought him the dismal news of all his ten Children being slain at once, but he put himself into the lowest and most humble posture, *rent his mantle*, (or robe) *shaved his head, and fell down on the ground and worshipped, and said: Naked came I out of my mothers womb, and naked shall I return* * *thither; the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord.*

Jb. 1. 21.

* Namely to the womb of the earth, to which 'tis like in uttering these words he pointed with his finger.

What more emphatical expression of an humble and profound submission to the Divine Will could have been uttered by the tongue of a man? *Naked came I out of my mothers womb, and naked shall I return thither:* I have as much still as I brought into the world with me: *For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out*, 1 Tim. vi. 7. That which I have lost it was not mine own, it was but lent me by God, who might call for it again

gain whenſoever he pleaſed: I came into the world without it, and without it may I go again out of the world, and be never the leſs happy.

The Lord gave; I acknowledge his goodneſs and favour in what I once enjoyed, and that I ſo long enjoyed it: *And the Lord hath taken away*; I acknowledge and ſubmit to the Lord's good pleaſure in ſtripping me of all theſe comforts and enjoyments. He doth not ſay, *the Lord hath given, but the Sabeans and Chaldeans have taken away*, but he looks beyond men and all inferiour cauſes to God, and ſaith, *The Lord hath taken away.* The Seventy adde here ſomewhat more, ὡς τῷ κυρίῳ ἔδοξεν, οὕτως ἐγένετο, *as it pleaſeth the Lord, ſo things come to paſs.*

Bleſſed be the name of the Lord: To bleſs God when he beſtoweth his bleſſings on us is very eaſie: It is no hard thing to ſay, *The Lord hath given, bleſſed be the name of the Lord:* But to bleſs God even when he hath taken away, and deprived us at once of all our comforts, this is hard indeed, this is heroick, this argues an excellent ſpirit, more than thouſands of thankſgivings in a proſperous condition; this is an admirable inſtance of *Self-Reſignation.*

Not to murmur and repine at such exceedingly severe providences is a great expression of a *resigned* temper; how great an evidence then is an heart born up in such miserable circumstances in a thankful and praising frame?

And that *Job* should now bless God when *Satan* hoped and was so confident
Ch. i. 11. that he would *curse him to his face*, was a great foil and defeat given to him, such a disappointment as could not but vex him at the very heart.

Nor is that other Expression of *Job*'s, Chap. ii. 10. unlike to this, namely his answer to that wretched speech of his wife's, *He said unto her, Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh; what? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? What? is God bound always to be heaping his favours upon us? Must we have nothing but sun-shine, fair and calm days, without wind, or clouds or rain? Must we be fed with nothing but marrow and fatness, taste nothing but what is sweet and delicious, must we have all smooth and flowery way in our journey? And if he for a while cloud himself, if he stop the streams of his comforts that flowed so abundantly upon us, if he give us to tast of the sowre and bitter, the waters of Marah, must we therefore repine*

pine and complain, and think evil of him, and grow weary of his ſervice? Having received ſo much good from him, is it not equitable and fit that we ſhould bear ſome evil and hardſhip when he ſends it? Should not the memory of his many and long continued mercies more ſweeten and endear our good God to us, than ſome preſent croſſes and adverſities imbitter our thoughts of him, and ſowre our ſpirits with diſcontent?

Oh the heighth and excellency of Grace in this holy man! He was *Vir ante Evangelia Evangelicus: A perſon of the true Evangelical and Chriſtian ſpirit before Chriſt or his Goſpel came into the world.* How had patience its perfect work in him! There could not be a braver ſpectacle, a more lovely ſight on the whole earth for God and Angels to behold, than ſuch a Soul in the midſt of ſuch trials; *the ornament of a meek and quiet ſpirit being in the ſight of God* πολυτελὲς *of great price.* If *Seneca* could ſay of *Cato*, * *Behold a ſight which that God who diligently obſerves the work of his own hands may fix his eye upon*, well may it be ſaid of holy *Job*.

* *Ecce ſpectaculum ad quod reſpiciat opus ſuo intentus Deus.*

This honourable *Elogium* is given of him Chap. 2. 10. *In all this Job ſinned not with his lips:* And the like in Chap. i. 22. where it is added, *nor charged God fooliſhly.*

He

He did not ſpeak unworthily of God or his diſpoſals, nor had he any disbecoming thoughts of him or them: Nay, he was ſo far from repining and fretting at the ſevereſt of them, that, as was ſaid, he took them *gratefully* at his hands.

As deformed and diſeaſed a Creature as *Job* was, as to his outward man, he was moſt ſound, fair and lovely within: Though his Body lay among the *aſhes* and *potſherds*, yet was he as to the inward Conſtitution of his Soul as the *wings of a Dove*, beautified with ſuch interchangeable colours, by the Sun ſhining upon her, that they are as it were *covered with ſilver, and her feathers with yellow gold.*

Pſ. lxviii. 13.

In the Song of *Hannah* it is ſaid, that *God raiſeth up the poor out of the duſt, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill:* But here we have a far greater wonder, God exalted *Job* even when he debaſed him to the duſt, and made him in his loweſt eſtate a glorious perſon; more glorious to all ages than ever he would have been had there been nothing in his ſtory, but that he was for his Wealth and Honour the greateſt of all the men of the Eaſt. So that *Job* even whilſt he was *of this low degree, might rejoyce in that he was exalted*, to allude to that of St. *James*, Chap. 1. 9.

Great

Great afflictions accompanied with an unconquerable patience canonize men, and advance them to a peculiar degree of honour and glory above the reſt of mankind. *Behold we count them happy that endure,* μακαρίζομεν, *we call them bleſſed,* James v. 11.

St. *Chryſoſtom* thus magnificently ſpeaks of *Job's* κοπρία, his *Dunghill*, that it was πάντος θρόνε βασιλικῆ σεμνότερα, *more ſtately than any Kingly Throne:* And of his τραύματα, his *Sores*, that they were ἁπάντων λίθων τιμιώτερα, *richer than any jewels and precious ſtones*; nay, that they were τῶν ἡλιακῶν ἀκτίνων φαιδρότερα, *more ſplendid and glorious than the very Sun-beams:* And again, ὅδε γὰρ ὅτω λαμπρὸς ἐπὶ θρόνε καθήμενος βασιλεὺς ὡς ἐκεῖνος ἐπὶ τῆς κοπρίας τότε καθήμενος, ἐπίσημος ἦν καὶ περιφανής, *that no King ſitting upon his Throne is ſo illuſtrious, as was* Job *then upon the Dunghill, honourable and glorious.*

That very Aſh-heap or *Dunghill* where the illuſtrious debaſed *Job* ſate was a Throne of glory, no Royal Seat of Majeſty or Chair of State was ſo glorious; here his patience was inthroned, here the humble Greatneſs and Majeſty of his mind ſhined forth, and *the Spirit of Glory reſted on him.*

What

What a pleaſure was it to Heaven to ſee this Champion come off ſo bravely, and to baffle all the attempts and arts that the Devil could uſe to break his ſpirit, and force him to impatience and unworthy reflections upon God and his Providence!

Job 1. 8. 2. 3. God ſaid twice to *Satan: Haſt thou conſidered my ſervant Job, that there is none like him in all the earth?* חַשַּׂמְתָּ לִבְּךָ *Haſt thou ſet thine heart upon my ſervant Job?* Haſt thou taken ſpecial notice of him? God ſeemeth to glory and make his boaſt of this excellent perſon, as a more worthy ſight than any that preſented it ſelf to the view of obſervation in any part of the world. But he was much more worthy of eſteem and admiration after he had been proved by ſuch ſore trials: when *the trial of his faith and patience was found unto praiſe and honour and glory.* So great was his Patience, ſo exemplary his *Reſignation*, that the holy Scripture ſets a ſpecial mark both upon it and him. Upon *it* James 5. 11. *Ye have heard of the patience of Job:* upon *him*, in that he is mentioned as one of God's three moſt peculiar Favourites, *Ezech.* 14.

And now, having given ſome account of his woful afflictions and his great patience under them, we will ſpeak briefly of the reward this his ſubmiſſion and *Reſignation* of

of himſelf to the Will of God was at laſt crowned with. After the Apoſtle had ſaid, in the forementioned place, *Ye have heard of the patience of Job*, it follows, *and have ſeen the end of the Lord, that the Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy.* And in the 42. Chapter of *Job* we find him moſt amply rewarded even in *this* life. In the ſeventh and eighth verſes we read that he found ſuch ſpecial favour in the eyes of God, that his three friends, who had added to the heavy weight of his afflictions, and had not ſpoken of God that which was right as *Job* had done, could not atone his anger with a Burnt-offering without *Job*'s interceſſion in their behalf. And in the tenth verſe it is ſaid, that *the Lord turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends; alſo the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before.* And in the twelfth verſe, that *the Lord bleſſed the latter end of* Job *more than his beginning: for he had fourteen thouſand Sheep, and ſix thouſand Camels, and a thouſand yoke of Oxen, and a thouſand She-aſſes:* whereas he had before but half this number of each of theſe, as hath been ſhewn. v. 9. 10.

Thus in his Goods and Poſſeſſions which were either deſtroyed by fire, or carried away by his thieviſh Neighbors the *Sabeans* and *Chaldeans*, and ſo were never to be enjoyed

joyed by him more, God gave him (in theſe) double: But as to his Children he gave him the juſt number he had before, viz. *ſeven ſons and three daughters*, v. 13. Theſe it is likely were not doubled, becauſe though they were taken away by death, yet they were not utterly loſt, but their ſpirits returned to God that gave them, they were ſtill alive with God, where their Father ſhould again meet them in the other life.

But there is this ſaid concerning theſe new daughters of *Job* which was not ſaid of the former, that *in all the land were no women found ſo fair as they*, ver. 15. And laſtly we read in ver. 16. that *after this lived Job an hundred and fourty years, and ſaw his ſons, and his ſons ſons, even four generations.* After which, the happy days he enjoyed here concluded in an unſpeakably more happy Eternity.

And thus, as *Satan* ſaid, *doth Job ſerve God for nought?* ſo we ſee that his great Patience and exemplary Submiſſion to the Will of God under the ſoreſt and ſevereſt trials, was not *in vain in the Lord*, but abundantly recompenced.

But before I conclude this Example of *Reſignation*, I muſt take notice that ſo great was *Job*'s Patience, that ſome of the *Rabbins*

kins of old, and ſome of late, have imagined the account that we have of him to be rather a moral fiction, a Romance and Parable, than a real Hiſtory. So very averſe are men to think any higher degrees of goodneſs attainable than what they themſelves are willing to come up to.

But that we may not doubt whether it were a true Hiſtory, beſides other arguments, that in *Ezech.* xiv. 14. 20. doth evidently prove it ſo to be. There it is twice ſaid, *Though theſe three men, Noah, Daniel and Job were in it, they ſhould but deliver their own ſouls by their righteouſneſs:* intimating, that if there were any hope or help for a Nation, none were more likely to prevail than theſe three perſons, moſt dear to God for their ſingular Piety.

A like expreſſion there is *Jer.* xv. 1. *Though Moſes and Samuel ſtood before me, yet my mind could not be to this people.* Now *Noah* and *Daniel*, *Moſes* and *Samuel* being no imaginary but real perſons, why ſhould it be thought that *Job* onely was ſo?

Let it be farther conſidered, that in *Jam.* 5. 10, 11. we are directed to the *Prophets* and to *Job* as examples of Patience. Now the Prophets being no fictions, but ſuch as really ſpake in the name of the Lord, how ſhould *Job* come to be joyned with them,

if

if there were never such a one in being? Surely we are not exhorted to the imitation of one who never was, nor encouraged to a *real* duty by an *imaginary* and *feigned* reward.

If this Story were a mere fiction, the argument to patience which St. *James* useth in those words, *Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord*, &c. might have been thus excepted against by those suffering Christians to whom he there speaketh, viz. *What do you tell us of one Job, of his patience and reward, there was never such a person, there were never such things practised as are said of him, and therefore how can what you have told us concerning him signifie any thing to our encouragement?*

Ch. 5. 11.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

Of the Example of Eli.

X. A third Example ſhall be that of *Eli*. He was both the High-Prieſt and Judge, the chief of both Capacities, Sacred and Civil, and judged *Iſrael* fourty years: But being greatly faulty in not uſing his power to the reſtraining his two ſons *Hophni* and *Phinehas*, that rendred the Service of God and the Prieſthood vile, by their Covetouſneſs, Luxury, and Uncleanneſs, God ſent *Samuel* with this ſad meſſage to him, namely, that *he would judge his houſe for ever for the iniquity which he knew of*, but did not reſtrain by his authority; That *his two ſons ſhould die on one day*; that the dignity of the Prieſthood ſhould be taken from his Family, and given to another.

This ſentence, though moſt righteous, was ſo ſevere, that it is ſaid that *both the ears of every one*, that heard of the execution of it, *ſhould tingle*, 1 Sam. iii. 11. And it was an irreverſible ſentence; for God ſaith, that *he hath ſworn unto the houſe of Eli, that the iniquity of Eli's houſe ſhall not*

be purged with ſacrifice, nor offering for ever, ver. 14. A dreadful expreſſion of his great diſpleaſure.

And now how was *Eli* affected with this meſſage? His Reſignation of himſelf, and free Submiſſion to the Will of God is expreſt ver. 18. in that ſpeech of his, *It is the Lord: Let him do what ſeemeth him good:* or, *what is good in his eyes. Let him do, not what I, but what he thinks beſt, who is both infinitely wiſe and juſt, and knoweth better than I how to diſpoſe of all for his own glory. He is holy in all his ways, and therefore 'tis fit his will ſhould take place.*

His heart did not *fret againſt the Lord*, nor was he *cut to the heart* when this ſad cutting meſſage was brought him, which was no leſs than the *cutting off of his arm, and the arm of his fathers houſe:* As it is expreſt Chap. ii. 31. And he gave proof of it: For when he heard that his two ſons were ſlain in Battel, (which was the ſign God gave of the approching ruine of his houſe, Chap. ii. 34.) he ſeemed to bear this unconcernedly in compariſon of the following tidings.

For when he heard that the *Ark of God* was taken, that ſad word ſtrikes him backward, and made him ſink down in a deadly ſwound: Then he fell off from his Seat, and

and brake his neck with the fall, Chap. iv. 18. The good old man was so resigned to the Will of God as to his own concerns, that he could patiently bear the departure of the glory of his house, but the *departure of the Glory from Israel*, of the *Ark*, which was the token of God's special favour and residence among them, this he could not bear.

CHAP. XI.

Of the Example of DAVID.

XI. THe fourth Example I ſhall propoſe of *Self-Reſignation* is holy *David*, *a man after God's own heart*, that would fulfill πάντα τὰ θελήματα, *all his wills*, as it is *Acts* xiii. 22. He was eminent for obedience to the Divine Commands; *he delighted to do the will of God*, yea *his law was within his heart*, Pſal. xl. 11. And *had reſpect unto all his Commandments*, Pſal. cxix. 6. And he was likewiſe eminent for a patient ſubmiſſive temper under great trials and ſufferings.

That was an exceeding great trial, when, with his houſhold and loyal Subjects, he was forced to fly with all ſpeed out of *Jeruſalem*, for the ſaving his life from the bloudy machinations of his own Son *Abſolom*. We have the Story in 2 *Sam.* 15, & 16. Chapters. *Abſolom*, his third ſon by birth, but now his eldeſt, and therefore Heir apparent to the Crown, being impatient to ſtay for it till the natural death of his Father, deſigned firſt by flattering civilities to inſinuate himſelf into the hearts of the

the people, and afterwards by armed power to force his way into his Throne.

For his *perſon*, he was of a very lovely aſpect and taking preſence, *ſo that in all Iſrael there was none to be ſo much praiſed as Abſolom for his beauty; from the ſole of his foot even to the crown of his head there was no blemiſh in him.* Ch. xiv. 25.

He had alſo a fair and ſmooth tongue, was of a winning and inſinuating behaviour, ſo that *he ſtole away the hearts of the men of Iſrael.* And having ſo done it was an eaſie buſineſs to get himſelf choſen and proclaimed King, which was done by the men of *Iſrael*, and that in *Hebron* too, the very place where his Father was firſt anointed by the men of *Judah*, and ſeven years and an half after by the Tribes of *Iſrael.* Ch. xv. 2, 3, 4, 5. v. 6, 13. Ch. xv. 10.

And now *Abſolom* endeavours to confirm himſelf in his uſurped dominion by the beſt arts of power and policy he could imagine. He gains *Achitophel* to be of his ſide, who was the King's Counſellor, a man of that venerable eſteem for his great wiſdom, that his Counſel is ſaid to be, *as if a man had enquired at the Oracle of God*, Chap. xvi. 23.

He is buſie in preparing a great Army againſt his Father; the Conſpiracy was

ſtrong, and the people increaſed continually with *Abſolom*, which made him cry out, as he did, in the third Pſalm, ver. 1, 2. (a Pſalm penned upon this occaſion) *Lord, how are they increaſed that trouble me? many are they that riſe up againſt me, many there be which ſay of my ſoul, there is no help for him in God.* And that theſe *many* were not the ἀλλόφυλοι, *Philiſtims*, *Moabites*, *Amalakites*, *Amonites*, and other Heathens, but his own Subjects, was a more afflicting trouble. And that among theſe ſhould be found *Achitophel*, his Friend and Counſellor, that *his* head and hand ſhould be in all *this*, this made it more afflicting ſtill, as he complaineth 55. 12. *It was not an enemy that reproached me, then I could have born it: Neither was it he that hated me, that did magnifie himſelf againſt me, then would I have hid my ſelf from him. But it was thou, a man, mine equal, my guide and my acquaintance: we took ſweet counſel together, and walked unto the houſe of God in company.*

And that the *General*, he that headed the Army againſt him ſhould be *Amaſa*, the ſon of his ſiſter *Abigail*, and therefore ſo near to him, as that *David* ſaith of him, *that he was bone of his bone, and fleſh of his fleſh*; this was another aggravation of his affliction.

2 Sam. ix. 13.

And laſtly, This made the affliction moſt ſharp

ſharp of all, that he that was at the head of all, that animated this rebellious body ſhould be *Abſolom*. That the Son ſhould thirſt after the Fathers bloud, that he which *came forth of his bowels ſhould ſeek his life*, as he complains Chap. xvi. 11. And that he ſhould be the ſon whom he loved moſt paſſionately, even ſo paſſionately, that after his three years abſence from Court, it is ſaid Chap. xiii. 39. That *the ſoul of David longed* (וַתִּכַל *was conſumed*) *to go forth unto Abſolom*. And then, all this to befall him in his old age too, and after he had by his valour and prudent conduct ſaved his people out of the hands of their enemies.

καὶ σὺ τέκνον.

Put all theſe ſad circumſtances together, and was not *David* in ſore troubles and trials? But how doth he behave and acquit himſelf herein? Doth he quarrel with Providence, and the inſtruments of his trouble? Nothing leſs: But his diſpoſition and carriage was all compoſed of meekneſs and ſubmiſſion to the Will of God.

Being ſenſible of the eminent danger he was in, he prudently provides for his ſecurity by removing from *Jeruſalem*, which he and his ſervants did with all ſpeed, leſt *Abſolom* ſhould ſuddenly overtake them, and *thruſt* (or *puſh*) evil upon them, וְהִדִּיחַ Ch.xv.14.

them, as the word is: For his enemies were moſt quick and active in their preparations againſt him: which therefore he calls the *ſtormy wind and tempeſt*, Pſal. lv. 8. Of his haſty fleeing he ſpeaks, *Pſal.* lv. 6, 7. (which refers to this occaſion, as appears by ver. 14.) where he cries: *Oh that I had wings like a dove; for then would I flee away and be at reſt: Lo then would I wander far off, and remain in the wilderneſs. Selah. I would haſten my eſcape from the windy ſtorm and tempeſt.*

Being gotten out of the City in haſte, he and his Guard, they tarry in a place that was far off (v. 17.) to refreſh themſelves; not knowing whither to go, or where to be at reſt, (as he then told *Ittai* the *Gittite*, who was come to him reſolving to fare as he did) v. 20.

Having made a little pauſe, here he paſſeth over the Brook *Kidron*, ver. 23. (a Brook between the City and Mount *Olivet*) the Countrey weeping with a loud voice at this ſad Proceſſion: As alſo when they were going up Mount *Olivet*, *they went weeping as they went up, every one covering his head*, after the manner of mourners, ver. 30. And in the midſt of theſe hardſhips and ſorrowful ſympathizings of the people, which could not but much affect his

his heart, (having given order to *Zadok* the Prieſt to return back to the City with the Ark of God, which thus far accompanied him, deſiring that that Monument of God's Glory and Preſence might not wander up and down with him in his deſolate condition, but be placed again in the City of God) he thus expreſſeth the humble and quiet reſignation of his ſpirit, Ch. xv. 25, 26. *If I ſhall find favour in the eyes of the Lord, he will bring me again, and ſhew me both it* (the Ark) *and his habitation,* (*Jeruſalem* the City of the great King) *but if he thus ſay, I have no delight in thee, behold here am I, let him do unto me as ſeemeth good unto him.*

Though I be brought to exceſſive ſtraits, though I be deprived of all my glory in this my old age, after all the good ſervices I have done for Iſrael and Judah, yet here am I, let him do as ſeemeth good to him, not as ſeemeth good to me. Thy will, O Lord, ſhall be my will, thy pleaſure I will reſt ſatisfied with and acquieſce in. Thou ſhalt chuſe for me, and to thy choice will I accommodate my ſelf. Be it ſo as thou wouldeſt have it to be, O thou moſt holy and wiſe, and the Lord of all, who doſt whatſoever pleaſeth thee both in heaven and earth. My heart is ready, O God, my heart is ready, it is fixed and reſolved to drink of that

that Cup which thou haſt appointed me.

And his humble diſpoſition of Soul diſcovered it ſelf immediately after in his penitential behaviour (already mentioned)
V. 30. as he went up the Mount. *He wept as he went up, and had his head covered, and he went barefoot*, which were the moſt ſignificant expreſſions of a great humiliation and ſubmiſſneſs of ſpirit.

And this meek frame of Soul in reference to *God's* diſpoſals did diſpoſe him to a rare meekneſs and patience in reference to *men*.

There happened a little after he was paſt Mount *Olivet* a very provoking occaſion: For *Shimei* a Benjamite threw ſtones at him and his men, and caſt duſt at them all along in the way, and added to this indignity curſes and revilings of the perſon
Ch. xvi. 7, 8. of the King. *Abiſhai*, one of his three chief Commanders, was ſo incenſed at the horrid inſolence of this *dead dog*, as he called *Shimei*, that he prays the King that he might go over to him and take off his head. But *David* was ſo far from permitting this, that he was more offended at *Abiſhai's* Zeal for him, than at *Shimei's* injuries, and thus replies to him: *What have I to do with you ye ſons of Zeruiah? ſo let him curſe, becauſe the Lord hath ſaid unto him,*

him, *Curſe David*, (that is, becauſe the Lord ſaw it good to permit him to curſe me for my puniſhment) *who then ſhall ſay, Wherefore haſt thou done ſo?* Again, *Behold*, (ſaith he) *my ſon which came forth of my bowels ſeeketh my life: how much more now may this Benjamite do it? Let him alone, and let him curſe: for the Lord hath bidden him.*

David was not a perſon of a dull phlegmatick temper, of a ſlow and ſtupid diſpoſition, but of a vigorous active ſpirit; he was ſenſible what a barbarous act this was in *Shimei* thus to inſult over his King, and that in his great diſtreſs, but being alſo ſenſible of God's Providence in permitting this wretched man thus to affront, revile and curſe him, to correct him for his ſins, he quietly and meekly ſubmitted to it.

And *David* loſt nothing by his humble ſubmiſſion; for God delivered him from the policies of *Achitophel*, from the powerful Army of *Abſolom*, and brought him back with joy and triumph to *Jeruſalem*.

And as for *Shimei*, God returned his wickedneſs upon his own head, and *David* found that true, which he did but modeſtly ſuppoſe upon *Shimei*'s curſing: *It may be* (ſaith he) *the Lord will look upon mine affliction.* Ver. 12.

fliction, and that the Lord will requite good for his curſing this day. And he that ſpake with ſuch an humble reſigned mind, *But if he ſay, I have no delight in thee, behold here am I, let him do to me as ſeemeth good to him*, found that God *did* delight in him, and therefore delivered him: As he himſelf expreſſeth it, Pſalm xviii. 19. *He delivered me becauſe he delighted in me.* God did what ſeemed good to *David*, ſeeing he was willing he ſhould do what ſeemed good to *himſelf.*

I will adde one more paſſage expreſſive of *David's Reſignation:* It is in Pſal. xxxix. The particular occaſion is not mentioned, but that he was in a moſt afflicted condition we find in the tenth verſe: *Remove thy ſtroke away from me, I am conſumed by the blow of thine hand:* And v. 13. he prayeth, *that God would ſpare him that he might recover ſtrength.* But yet he was patient, ſubmiſſive and quiet, ver. 9. *I was dumb, I opened not my mouth, becauſe thou didſt it:* As in another caſe he ſaith, *Surely I have behaved and quieted my ſelf as a child that is weaned of his mother: my ſoul is even as a weaned child*, Pſal. cxxxi. 2.

See how this great man expreſſeth himſelf in words of greateſt lowlineſs and humility. When he has to do with God, he

is

is as a *little child*, a poor, low, contemptible thing in his own eſteem; as *a worm and no man*, as he ſpeaks *Pſal.* xxii. 6. Though when he had to do with *men*, and was to fight the Lord's Battels, who more a man than *David?* Who more courageous and ſtout-hearted? When he was but a ſtripling, he encountred and ſlew a Lion and a Bear, and the great Giant *Goliah.*

Now if *David* a King, one of ſuch heighth and dignity, one of ſo great fame and renown in the world, one of ſuch incomparable courage and magnanimity, did with ſuch meekneſs and ſubjection of Soul ſubmit to the Divine Providence, and in ſuch inſtances as theſe, wherein as a *King* and as a *Father* he was moſt highly provoked and unworthily dealt with: is it not a ſhame for us, who are ſo much his inferiors, to be impatient and unreſigned, and that in far leſs trials than his were.

CHAP.

CHAP. XII.

Of the Example of our BLESSED SAVIOUR.

XII. OUr fifth Example of Holy Reſignation is our Lord Jeſus Chriſt: Of all Examples the greateſt: the brighteſt and faireſt Pattern of all: for none ever obeyed, none ever ſuffered ſo much as the holy and bleſſed Jeſus, and *through ſufferings was this Captain of our Salvation made perfect*, Heb. ii. 10.

He is the Ἀρχηγὸς, the *Captain* and brave Leader of the noble Army of Martyrs, as all *ſelf-reſigning* Souls are: For to give their *body of Sin*, and Self-deſires to be burnt, their own Wills to be conſumed by the flames of Divine Love, what is it leſs than Martyrdom?

And I chuſe to mention our Saviour next to *David*, (though he was indeed far before him in Obedience and Submiſſion) becauſe he is the *Spiritual David*, and called by the name *David* by the Prophets, (*David* being an Hiſtorical Type and Figure of Chriſt both in his Troubles and Triumphs, and therefore the

ſecond

ſecond Pſalm is applicable both to *David* and Chriſt) and becauſe there are ſome memorable conformities between them as to this particular of Reſignation.

1. Chriſt had his *Judas*, as *David* his *Achitophel:* one near to him, and that *did eat at his table*, conſpired and *lift up the heel againſt him.*

2. *Iſrael*, whom God calls his *Son*, dealt as unworthily with Chriſt as *Abſolom* did with *David.*

3. *David* (as we have ſhewn) being conſpired againſt, goeth with his ſervants out of *Jeruſalem*, paſſeth over the Brook *Kidron*, goes up by the aſcent of Mount *Olivet*, he weeps as he went, *his heart was ſore pained within him, the ſtorms of death were fallen upon him, and horrour overwhelmed him:* as he complained upon this occaſion *Pſalm* lv. 2, 4, 5. And now it was that he expreſt his humble Reſignation to the Will of God in thoſe words: *Behold here am I, let him do to me as ſeemeth good unto him.*

And this *Spiritual David*, beginning to undergo his laſt and greateſt Sufferings, goes out of *Jeruſalem*, where his enemies were conſpiring to deſtroy him, and *Judas* helping to facilitate their cruel enterpriſe. He, with his Diſciples, paſſeth over

ver the Brook *Cedron*, (the ſame with *Kidron*) John xviii. 1. he comes to *the mount of Olives*, (the ſame with Mount *Olivet*) Matth. xxvi. 30. and in a Garden there, *he began to be ſorrowful and ſore amazed*, and *very heavy*: Told his three Diſciples that *his Soul was exceeding ſorrowful even unto death*. Here he wept, *he offered up prayers and ſupplications with ſtrong crying and tears*: And, being in an *Agony*, *ſweat as it were drops of blood*. And here he expreſt his humble *Reſignation* to the Will of his Father in theſe words: *O my Father, if this Cup may not paſs away from me except I drink it, thy will be done*, Matth. xxvi. 14. Or as it is in St. *Luke*: *Father, if thou be willing, remove this Cup from me, nevertheleſs not my will, but thine be done*. And thoſe words whereby *David* expreſſeth his *Reſignation*, Pſal. xl. 7, 8. we find applied unto Chriſt, Heb. x. 7. *Lo I come, in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God*. And in him were they verified in a far more eminent degree.

Mat. xxvi. 37. Ver. 38. Heb. v. 7.

There was no compare between *David*'s *Reſignation* and our Saviours, his Cup was much more bitter, his Sufferings were not ſuch as are common to men, but were of an extraordinary nature, being deſigned for

for an extraordinary end, *viz.* The making atonement and expiation for the ſins of the world. *He bare our ſins in his own body on the tree; was wounded for our iniquities, bruiſed for our ſins.* And he was a Perſon far from deſerving the leaſt of ſufferings by any the leaſt default: For he was ſpotleſly, innocent, and ever lived in moſt perfect Obedience to the Will of God.

Yet notwithſtanding the unſpeakable greatneſs of his Sufferings, and his non-deſert of them, he did not in the leaſt complain of his Father for giving him up to them, but intirely ſubmitted to and acquieſced in his will and pleaſure. *The Cup that my Father gives me to drink,* (ſaith he) *ſhall I not drink it? Not as I will but as thou willeſt.*

And the *Reſignation* of his Soul was alſo expreſt by the moſt wonderful Meekneſs & Charity he diſcovered towards his bloudy Enemies, even in the midſt of their unſufferable abuſes and barbarous cruelties. *He was led as a Lamb to the ſlaughter, and as a ſheep dumb before the ſhearers he opened not his mouth.* Wherein alſo *David* was a Type of our Saviour, *viz.* in his behaviour towards the reviling *Shimei* already mentioned.

But the Reſignation of our Bleſſed Saviour (which was of all others incomparably the greateſt) I ſhall not farther inlarge on, becauſe I have diſcourſed already of it, and ſhall have yet farther occaſion to ſpeak more in another Chapter; I will onely add, that this is the Copy we are to eye moſt, though we are incompaſſed about with a *great cloud* of other Witneſſes, and noble Examples of this Vertue.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIII.

Of the Example of the Apoſtle Saint PAUL.

XIII. THE ſixth and laſt Example I ſhall mention is Bleſſed *Paul*: A *follower of Chriſt*, as he ſtiles himſelf, 1 *Cor.* xi. 1. And he imitated him in nothing more than in *Self-Reſignation*.

The very firſt words he ſpake at his Converſion did ſpeak the great preparedneſs of his Soul for this Grace: *Lord*, ſaid he, *what wilt thou have me to do?* Acts ix. 6. There then ſhone round about him a light from Heaven above the brightneſs of the Sun, but a more glorious light ſhined into his heart; and as that light ſtruck his *Body* down to the earth, ſo did this his *Soul*, and humbled it to the loweſt degree of Self-abaſement and ſubmiſſive compliance with the Will of God.

Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? was as well the language of his *heart*, as the voice of his lips. And whatſoever the Will of God was that he ſhould either do or ſuffer afterward, he was moſt pliable and yielding to it. He would will or act

nothing but according to the Will of Christ. *To him to live was Christ*, Phil. i. 21. His own proper will was swallowed up in *his* will, so that *he* did not so much live as *Christ* lived in him, *Gal.* ii. 20.

None of the holy Writers spake more frequently or vigorously than St. *Paul* of the necessity of our *being crucified to the world, and of having the world crucified unto us, of crucifying the flesh with the affections and lusts, of mortifying through the Spirit the deeds of the body*, as being the onely way to eternal life, *of putting off the old man which is corrupt according to deceitful lusts:* By all which expressions is meant the subduing our own will and every inordinate affection, whatsoever is contrary to the Will of God and opposite to *Self-Resignation.*

These things this excellent Apostle doth inculcate and press with all seriousness, and in expressions of greater significancy, of a more spiritual force and fuller energy than any forms of speech that occur in the *Old* Testament.

And what he thus teacheth and exhorts to, he was an eminent Example of the Practice of. He himself *was crucified with*
Gal. ii. 20. *Christ*; *he suffered the loss of all things*, and accounted all other gains and advantages

but

but loſse and dung that he might win Chriſt, that *he might know the power of Chriſt's reſurrection, and the fellowſhip of his ſufferings, being made conformable unto his death*, Phil. iii. 8, 10.

He profeſſed that it is moſt reaſonable and becoming us, that if Chriſt died for us we ſhould live to him and not to our ſelves, or the pleaſing our own wills, and that the *Love of Chriſt* doth with a ſweet force *conſtrain* hereunto; and that the *mercies of God* do powerfully engage us to make an entire *oblation of our ſelves to him, which is our reaſonable ſervice*. Rom. xii. 1.

And (I ſay) his practice and behaviour was fully agreeable to theſe his profeſſions. At his firſt Converſion God ſhewed him how great things he muſt ſuffer for his names ſake, but the hardſhips he was to endure did not at all ſtartle him. The Holy Ghoſt witneſſed in every City, that bonds and afflictions did await him, but ſaith he, *none of theſe things trouble me, nor count I my life dear unto my ſelf*, (and what is dearer than life?) *ſo that I might finiſh my courſe with joy, and the miniſtry which I have received of the Lord Jeſus, to teſtifie the Goſpel of the grace of God*, Acts xx. 24. And therefore he went to *Jeruſa-* Acts ix. 16.

lem, (where he was to expect very great afflictions) δεδεμένος πνεύματι, *bound in Spirit*, constrained by a holy violence, ver. 22.

Nor could he be perswaded by those Disciples at *Tyre* that, by revelation from the Spirit, told him that he would incur much hazard by going up to *Jerusalem*, and therefore advised him not to go: Nor was he wrought upon by those other Disciples who endeavoured by their tears, added to their earnest entreaties, to stay him: But his answer to them was, *What mean you to weep, and to break mine heart, for I am ready, not to be bound onely, but also to die at Jerusalem, for the name of the Lord Jesus*, Acts xxi. 13. And by the stedfast purpose of his Soul to be resigned to the Will of God herein, did he at last win them over to the same Resignation, ver. 14. *And when he would not be perswaded we ceased, saying, The will of the Lord be done.*

And what severe trials he was exercised with, how many and great things he suffered, we have an account in 1 *Cor.* iv. 11, *&c.* 2 *Cor.* vi. 4, 5. and Chap. xi. 23, *&c.* in which place are mentioned together above twenty instances of his sufferings.

So

So far was he from living a ſelf-pleaſing life, that, if he pleaſed himſelf in any thing, it was in *infirmities, in reproaches, in neceſſities, in perſecutions, in diſtreſſes for Chriſts ſake*, Chap. xii. 10.

So far was he from impatience and ſhrinking at thoſe diſpoſals of Providence, that *he rejoyced in his ſufferings*, while he *filled up that which was behind of the ſufferings of Chriſt in his fleſh, for his bodies ſake which is the Church*, Col. i. 24.

But there is one paſſage in St. *Paul's* Writings which I had chiefly in mine eye when I thought him, next to our bleſſed Saviour, moſt worthy to be preſented as a Pattern for Chriſtians to follow: And it is a paſſage which expreſſeth the great progreſs he had made in *Self-Reſignation* both as to the *active* and *paſſive* part of it: Both as it conſiſts in a free and entire obedience to difficult commands, and in patient bearing hard trials and ſufferings.

The paſſage is that in *Phil.* iv. 11, 12, 13. *I have learned in whatſoever ſtate I am therewith to be content. I know both how to be abaſed, and I know how to abound, every where and in all things, I am inſtructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to ſuffer need. I can do all things through Chriſt that ſtrengthneth me.*

Of which words I may ſay as *Auſonius* of the Emperours words, *O mentis aureæ verba bracteata! O plated* (or rich and moſt excellent) *words, expreſſing a golden* (or moſt beautiful and goodly) *mind.* Yea, ſuch is the preciouſneſs of this Wiſdom, *to know how to be either abaſed or to abound, to have learned in every condition to be content,* that it is not *to be valued with pure gold, with the precious Onyx or the Saphire, the price of it is above Rubies.*

To know how to abound and to be full, and not deny God, not to forget and forſake him in fulneſs, not to be high-minded and truſt in uncertain riches, not to make the abundance of theſe outward things to adminiſter to pride and haughtineſs, luxury and ſenſuality; but on the contrary, to be humble, to truſt in God, and acknowledge him in all his Gifts, to be moderate in abundance, and ſtrictly religious, this is no eaſie thing, 'tis a leſſon that few will learn, but St. *Paul* had learnt it.

To know how to be abaſed, how to want and to be kept ſhort, to look upon others full portions in this life without Covetouſneſs or envying what they have, to bear adverſity, to endure afflictions, loſſes and difficulties of all ſorts without impatience and murmuring at the allotment of Provi-

Providence, to be quiet and meek, and much more, to be chearful and rejoyce under all; not to love God the leſs, nor truſt in him the leſs, nor to flag or be diſcouraged by this means in his ſervice; this is alſo a difficult and uneaſie leſſon, but holy *Paul* was likewiſe herein inſtructed.

Καυχώμεθα, *We glory in tribulations*, ſaith this great Apoſtle, *Rom.* v. 3. Glorying is not mere joy, but joy exalted to its utmoſt heighth. And what a full expreſſion is that he uſeth, 2 Cor. vii. 4. ὑπερεπερισσεύομαι τῇ χαρᾷ, *I do more than abound with joy in all tribulation:* or, *I rejoyce with a ſuperlative joy.* What a mighty Proficient was this bleſſed perſon in the School of Chriſt! Yea, he farther ſaith, that he could *do all things through Chriſt ſtrengthening him:* And he had learned to be content not onely in ſome conditions, but in *whatſoever ſtate:* He knew how to be abaſed and how to want not onely in ſome circumſtances, but *every where and in all things.* Here was the power of Godlineſs indeed, and *the Kingdom of God not in word but in power.* And after all this he aſcribes nothing to himſelf, but gives Chriſt the glory of all. *He was* (he ſaith) able to do all *this through Chriſt ſtrengthening him*; through the power of his grace, which was ſufficient for him.

This

This is ſomewhat of the much more that might be obſerved concerning this bleſſed Apoſtle, who, in reſignation and ſubmiſſion to the Will of God, was one of the beſt Copies, and neareſt the Original, that ever was drawn by the finger of God, the Holy Spirit: And, next to the Life of *Chriſt* (the faireſt picture of Purity and Holineſs repreſented by the four Evangeliſts) the life of *Paul* is ſet forth at large; above one half of the *Acts of the Apoſtles* being ſpent in his Character. Nor was it out of any vain-glorious deſign, nor from any undue love or valuation of himſelf, that he intreated others *to be followers of him, as he was of Chriſt*, but from the inward ſenſe of the great ſweetneſs, peace and comfort, and the many advantages he found in the imitation of him, and from the abſolute neceſſity of this Duty. And theſe great reaſons induced him to propound himſelf as a pattern particularly to the *Corinthians*, 1 *Cor.* xi. 1. Chap. iv. 16. to the *Theſſalonians*, 2 *Theſſ.* iii. 7, 9. and to the *Philippians*, Chap. iii. 17. and Chap. iv. 9. *Thoſe things which ye have both learned and received, and heard and ſeen in me, do, and the God of peace ſhall be with you.*

Now then, O feeble and faint-hearted Chriſtian, take heart and courage from theſe

theſe great Examples, up and be doing, be ſtrong in the Lord and in the power of his might. Wait upon God, and apply thy ſelf heartily to him, that thou mayeſt be clothed with the ſame Spirit, and indued with power from on high. And as *Eliſha* ſaid of old: *Where is the Lord God of Elijah?* So rouſe up thy ſelf and ſay, Where is the God of *Paul*, the God of *Abraham*, *Job*, *David*, and the reſt? The ſame God who wrought effectually in theſe to ſuch an exemplary *Reſignation*, will be mighty in *thee* alſo, if thou haſt the *ſame Spirit of faith*, the ſame ſincerity and ſingleneſs of heart. *He that is mighty will magnifie thee*, will do great things for thee and in thee. *Jeſus Chriſt, the ſame yeſterday and to day and for ever*; what he was to St. *Paul* and others like him heretofore, he will be unto *thee* to day, and to all believing Souls for ever; ſuch as walk in the ſame Spirit, and in the ſame ſteps. 2 Kings ii. 14. Heb. xiii. 8.

Haſt thou not known, haſt thou not heard that the everlaſting God fainteth not, neither is weary? Nor hath he *forgotten to be gracious*; but his tender mercies are the ſame, and the arm of his ſtrength the ſame. *The ſame Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him*, Rom. x. 2. Iſa. xl. 28;

Onely

Onely take heed of being wearied and fainting in your minds, but *wait on the Lord, and he ſhall ſtrengthen your heart, wait I ſay on the Lord.* You ſhall then be enabled *to run the race that is ſet before you with patience*; though a long and an hard race, *you ſhall run it and not be weary*, you ſhall walk in the moſt difficult paths of obedience, *and not faint. The arm of the Lord ſhall awake as in the ancient days, in the generations of old:* As it did in the days of the forementioned Worthies: And *you ſhall be ſtrengthened*, as they were, *with all might according to his glorious power, unto all patience and long-ſuffering*, and that *with joyfulneſs.*

Iſa. li. 9.

Col. i. 11.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIV.

That the conſideration of Chriſt crucified is a very effectual means for the crucifying of the old man.

XIV. NInthly, Let thy mind dwell much upon the meditation of Chriſt crucified. Bring thy Self-will and inordinate affections to Mount *Calvary*, and there nail them to the Croſs of Chriſt. As Chriſt *blotted out the hand-writing of ordinances that was againſt us, and contrary to us*, viz. the Jewiſh Law, the Moſaical Rites, *and took it out of the way, nailing it to his Croſs*; ſo ſhould a Chriſtian do with the *law in his members*, or *the law of ſin and death*. The nailing it to the Croſs of Chriſt is a moſt effectual means to take it out of the way.

The Croſs of Chriſt, I ſay, is a proper inſtrument for the crucifying the old man, and the body of ſin, and the conſideration of Chriſt crucified a powerful Engine, *mighty through God to the pulling down of ſtrong holds*, to the beating down of all thoſe fortifications ſin hath raiſed in the Soul, *all imaginations*, all carnal reaſonings and

and affections, *every high thing that would exalt it ſelf againſt the knowledge of God, and the obedience of Chriſt.*

St. *Paul* ſpeaks his own experience of the ſucceſs he found in the ſerious conſideration of Chriſt crucified; Gal. vi. 14. *God forbid that I ſhould glory ſave in the Croſs of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, whereby the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.* That is, the vanities and hurtful allurements of the world, whether they be thoſe of its riches, honours or pleaſures, are become liveleſs and untempting to me, have no energy or force to perſwade me to an eager purſuit or fond embracement of them; I am ſo little affected towards them, ſo mortified to them, as to place no part of my happineſs in ſuch things.

Now then the meditation on Chriſt crucified is a means greatly available to the ſubduing our Self-will, and irregular appetites, in that

1. *His dying on the Croſs, as the Scripture declares that it was to make atonement and expiation for ſin, ſo it affirms that it was alſo deſigned to root out and deſtroy it.* This is aſſerted in many Texts.

Particularly in 1 Pet. ii. 24. *Who his own ſelf bare our ſins in his own body on the tree, that we being dead to ſin, ſhould live unto righte-*

righteouſneſs, by whoſe ſtripes ye were healed.

2 Cor. v. 14, 15. *For the Love of Chriſt conſtraineth us, becauſe we thus judge: that if one died for all, then were all dead: And that he died for all, that they which live ſhould not henceforth live to themſelves, but unto him which died for them, and roſe again.*

1 Pet. i. 18, 19. *Foraſmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as ſilver and gold, from your vain converſation,* &c. *but with the precious blood of Chriſt, as of a lamb without blemiſh and without ſpot.*

Gal. i. 4. *Who gave himſelf for our ſins, that he might deliver us from this preſent evil world, according to the will of God and our Father.*

Titus ii. 14. *Who gave himſelf for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purifie to himſelf a peculiar people, zealous of good works.*

Rom. viii. 3, 4. *For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the fleſh, God ſending his own Son in the likeneſs of ſinful fleſh, and for ſin condemned ſin in the fleſh: That the righteouſneſs of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the fleſh but after the ſpirit.*

2. *Chriſt's dying on the Croſs was deſigned to be an exemplary pattern of our crucifying the*

the body of ſin. As his Reſurrection is a figure of the Spiritual Reſurrection of Chriſtians, their riſing up to a life holy, heavenly and divine, ſo his Death on the Croſs is a figure and repreſentation of that Spiritual Death that is to paſs upon the old man.

And becauſe this is a neceſſary important truth, as well as pertinent to the point in hand, I ſhall obſerve three paſſages of Scripture to this purpoſe, and a little diſcant upon them.

Firſt, that in 1 Pet. iv. 1. *Foraſmuch then as Chriſt hath ſuffered for us in the fleſh, arm your ſelves likewiſe with the ſame mind: for he that hath ſuffered in the fleſh hath ceaſed from ſin.*

The *ſuffering in the fleſh* which the Apoſtle here tells us we are to imitate our Saviour in, is not to be meerly underſtood of ſuffering afflictions in the body, but of reſembling the ſuffering and dying of Chriſt, in dying unto ſin. This appears from what next follows, *he that hath ſuffered in the fleſh hath ceaſed from ſin.* Some Greek Copies leave out the Particle ἐν, and read ὁ παθὼν σαρκὶ, he that hath ſuffered or died *to the fleſh:* the ſame with that phraſe, *Rom.* vi. 2. *dead to ſin.* He that hath ſuffered or died to the fleſh, or he that hath

ſuffered

ſuffered pain and ſmart in the fleſh, in the mortifying of his ſinful life, and the deeds of the body, *hath ceaſed from ſin*, as he that is dead ceaſeth from the actions that belong to the natural life.

This alſo appears from Ver. 2. That *he no longer ſhould live the reſt of his time in the fleſh, to the luſts of men, but to the will of God*; not live any longer in the gratification of thoſe fleſhly appetites that captivate and inſlave the greater part of mankind; but on the contrary live a life of entire obedience and conformity to the Will of God.

A ſecond paſſage to the like purpoſe is that in *Philippians* iii. 10. *That I may know him, and the power of his reſurrection, and the fellowſhip of his ſufferings, being made conformable unto his death:* Which laſt words are a key to the foregoing; and this conformity to the death of Chriſt implies that it hath in it ſomething of Pattern and exemplary Conſideration, to be ſpiritually reſembled and imitated by a Chriſtian.

There is a knowing of the power of Christ's Resurrection and Sufferings *without* us, as they refer to God the Father, in purchasing his favour, procuring the Pardon of our sins, and Reconciliation with him: For Christ was *delivered* (to death) *for our offences, and rose again for our justification*, Rom. iv. 5. And besides there is the knowing of the power of Christ's Death and Resurrection *within* us, there is something to be done and transacted in us that is answerable and bears conformity thereunto. There is a κοινωνία παθημάτων, a partaking of his Sufferings in a spiritual sense; when we are enabled by the power of God to suffer the pain and agonies that accompany the crucifying of the flesh or body of sin, and to die *unto sin* as he died *for* it. And there is a partaking of Christ's Resurrection in a spiritual sense, when we are enabled to rise to a new and heavenly life, when *we seek*, and savour, *those things which are above, where Christ sits at the right hand of God*, Col. iii. 1.

This is that excellent knowledge of Christ for which the Apostle *counted all things*

things but loſs and dung, ver. 8. Had he reſted in a mere ſpeculative, hiſtorical knowledge of the Death and Reſurrection of Chriſt without him, and been impatient of the energy and power of both within him, had he not ſo known Chriſt dying and raiſed again to life, as to be ſpiritually crucified with him, and to riſe with him to newneſs of life; ſuch a knowledge would not have availed him in the end.

The third paſſage is that in *Rom.* vi. 4, 5, 6. *Like as Chriſt was raiſed up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even ſo we alſo ſhould walk in newneſs of life: For if we have been planted together in the likeneſs of his death, we ſhall be alſo in the likeneſs of his reſurrection.*

By this likeneſs of Chriſt's Death, and likeneſs of his Reſurrection, it appears that there is a lively reſemblance of both which a Chriſtian is obliged to endeavour after. Then it follows: *Knowing this that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of ſin might be deſtroyed, that henceforth we ſhould not ſerve ſin.*

3. *The Death and Sufferings of Christ are very powerful to engage and enable us to the great duties of crucifying worldly lusts, and mortifying corrupt affections, as they are effectual to work in us the most heart-bleeding sorrow for sin, the most vehement hatred and detestation of it, and to raise the soul to the greatest degrees of love and ingenuous gratitude.*

1. *To work in us the most heart-bleeding sorrow for sin.* Who can seriously consider *Christ crucified*, Christ bleeding on the Cross, bleeding from the sixth to the ninth hour, (from our twelve a Clock to three) his bleeding Head, crowned with sharp thorns, his bleeding Hands and Feet, and Side; I say, who can consider this and not bleed within? Who can *look upon him that was pierced*, and not be inwardly pierced himself, not be *prickt to the heart*, as they are said to be Acts ii. 37. at the preaching of *Christ crucified.*

And when we consider that *he was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities*, or (as the words are ren-

rendred by ſome) *of our tranſgreſſions and iniquities:* When we conſider that *we* have crucified the Lord of Life and Glory, that *our ſins* nailed him to the Croſs, wounded him to the heart, and put him to all the grief and pain he underwent, how can it be that our hearts ſhould not be wounded within us? How can we forbear to expreſs our ſorrow for ſin in ſome ſuch words as thoſe of *Jeremiah*, *My bowels, my bowels, I am pained at the very heart: O that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears!*

And can we conſider his *Agony* in the Garden, the *exceeding ſorrowfulneſs of his Soul*, his *extream heavineſs* and *ſore amazement*, his *ſtrong crying and tears*, and his *ſweating great drops of blood*, and not be melted into holy mournings and relentings for our ſins, and for all our unkind and unworthy behaviour towards Chriſt, who thus ſuffered for us?

How hard is that heart, which the ſo great and dolorous ſufferings of our Saviour cannot melt and diſſolve!

At the Paſſion of Chriſt (beſides other Prodigies) it is ſaid *the rocks rent*; and are our hearts harder than rocks, not to be affected with remorſe at the conſideration of *Chriſt crucified?*

Omnis creatura Chriſto morienti compatitur; ſol obſcuratur, terra movetur, petræ ſcinduntur, velum Templi dividitur, ſepulchra aperiuntur: Solus homo non compatitur, pro quo ſolo Chriſtus moritur.

It is Saint *Hierom*'s obſervation: *When Chriſt died, all creatures were his fellow-ſufferers; the ſun was eclipſed, the earth ſhook, the rocks were cleft in ſunder, the veil of the Temple was rent in twain, the graves opened: Man alone, for whom onely Chriſt died, ſuffered not with him.*

Certainly, if the conſideration of our Saviour's Sufferings for our ſakes cannot prevail to melt our hearts into an holy ſorrow for our ſins, nothing will ever do it.

And if it hath ſuch a peculiar and ſoveraign efficacy to work an heart-bleeding ſorrow for Sin, it will conſequently be very effectual to the diſengaging us from it, to the taking us off from all thoſe vanities

nities and lusts which were formerly most dear and pleasing to us.

If we are grieved at the heart for our *Self-will*, Self-love, and manifold disobediences, we will not continue to *make provision for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof.*

2. *The Death and Sufferings of Christ are effectual to work in us the most vehement hatred and detestation of Sin.* It appears from thence how hateful and abominable a thing Sin is to *God*, who is original Rectitude and infinite Purity. For how could he demonstrate a greater antipathy and displeasure against Sin, than in being pleased to *bruise* and *put to grief* the Son of his love, and to give up *the brightness of his glory*, and the *express image of his person* to inexpressible dolours to the end he might make expiation for it.

If Sin were a sleight inconsiderable thing, if it were not a thing of a most odious and vile nature, a high injury to *God*, and of sad and dismal consequence to *man*, he would not have required *such* a Sacrifice for it.

This conſideration muſt needs be moſt forceable to the working in us deteſtation of Sin, whatſoever grace and favour it hath found in our eyes. Suppoſe we our ſelves to have ſeen Chriſt in the laſt Scene of his Sufferings, and to have accompanied him from the Garden of *Gethſemene*, where he was in his *Agony*, and ſweat drops of bloud, to the High Prieſts houſe, thence to the Judgment Hall before *Pilate*, thence to Mount *Calvary*, in which places he was reproached, ſpit upon the face, ſcourged, and at laſt nailed alive to the Croſs: And ſuppoſe him ſpeaking to us, as in another ſence *Pilate* ſpake of him, *Behold your King; Behold your Lord and Saviour: See the wounds which your Sins have given me; See how they have torn my fleſh, and deſpitefully uſed me: But the unſeen wounds, the inward ſorrows of my Soul are ſuch, as the heart of man cannot conceive, as neither hath the eye ſeen, nor the ear heard what may compare to them. Thus have your luſts dealt with me, and in all this ſee their cruelty.* If we had, I ſay, beheld our bleſſed Lord in his direful Sufferings, and heard him thus expreſſing himſelf to us, do

do we think we could ſtill cheriſh and entertain, hug and embrace thoſe Enemies of his which have put him to all this ſhame and torment?

But if we have an *inward* knowledge and feeling of Chriſt crucified, it will moſt undoubtedly inflame us into a juſt indignation againſt thoſe Luſts which ſuckt the Life-bloud of Chriſt, which ſlew and crucified the Lord of Glory. We ſhall ſay concerning *them*, what the *Jews* cried concerning *him*, *Away with them, away with them, they are not worthy to live:* Let theſe murderers of the juſt one die the death, but let *Jeſus* live, and let the Life of Chriſt be manifeſted in us. How can that be longer ſweet to me, which made Chriſt's Cup ſo exceeding bitter? How can I delight in that which made his Soul ſorrowful unto death? How ſhall that be my *pleaſure*, which was his *pain*, and put him to grief, ſuch grief, that *there was no ſorrow like unto his ſorrow?* How ſhould I glory in that, which put him to ſuch an *open* ſhame?

3. *The Death and Sufferings of Christ are powerful to raise the Soul to the greatest degrees of Love and Gratitude.* We have already shewn that there never was a Love like the Love of Christ, comparable to that Love he expreſt in giving himſelf an Offering and a Sacrifice to God for us.

Now, not to part with our Luſts for *him*, who parted with Life it ſelf for *us*, not to put our ſelves to ſome ſmart and pain in crucifying the Luſts of the Fleſh, in denying our Self-will, and taking up the Croſs and following him, who hath, to amazement denied himſelf, and taken upon him the greateſt of Sufferings for our ſakes; this would be an inſtance of the unworthieſt and vileſt ingratitude, and the greateſt unkindneſs imaginable done to Chriſt. This will be more grievous to him, than all his Sufferings from the *Jews* and *Romans*, it being a fruſtration and diſappointment of him in the great deſign, which we ſhewed, he had in ſubmitting to thoſe Sufferings.

But

But a Soul truly ſenſible of the Love of Chriſt in giving himſelf for us, can think nothing too dear and precious to part with for him, cannot look upon his Commands of *Self-denial* and *Self-Reſignation* as grievous and unſufferable.

I will adde, that the particular circumſtances of Chriſt's laſt Sufferings have a ſpecial force to the enabling a Chriſtian againſt ſuch and ſuch *particular* ſins, as prevail moſt among men, and which are the fruitfulleſt ſprouts and branches that grow out of that curſed ſtock of *Self-will:* As,

1. *Self-eſteem:* An over-dear valuing a man's ſelf, his fame and regard in the world; a ſeeking the praiſe and reſpects of men, and being diſturbed at their diſreſpects.

Now of how great efficacy muſt it needs be to the ſubduing this corruption to *conſider him who endured ſuch contradictions of ſinners againſt himſelf*, and how he was exerciſed with all manner of ſcorns and deriſions, all ſorts of abuſes, reproaches,

proaches, injuries, and indignities, that the wit and malice of his enemies could deviſe, to render him baſe and deſpicable before men.

He was called a blaſphemer, a deceiver, an enemy to *Cæſar*, (or traiterous perſon) a ſeditious ſtirrer up of the people, and all this about the time of his laſt Paſſion; as before he was called a *Samaritan*, (or Heretick) and *Beelzebub*.

And as an expreſſion of their contempt, they *ſpit upon his Face*, that ſacred Face which the glorious Angels delighted to look upon, which *Abraham* and many Kings and Prophets, and righteous perſons did deſire to ſee. What indignity like to this! Then they *ſmote him on the Face*, adding farther contempt accompanied with *pain*, to the diſgrace of having his Face beſmeared with their filthy ſpittle. And withall they *covered* his Face, ſaying, *Propheſie unto us, thou Chriſt, who it is that ſmote thee.*

Thus contumelioufly did they uſe the Anointed of the Lord; and as in the laſt paſſage they mockt at his *Prophetical*, ſo did

did they afterwards at his *Kingly* Office; putting on him a gorgeous Robe, platting Thorns into the form of a Crown, and putting it on his head, and a Reed for a Sceptre into his hand, and then bowing the knee before him, saying, *Hail King of the Jews.*

These are some few instances of the many dishonours and disgraceful indignities done unto him.----- I might adde that the kind of Death he suffered was as *ignominious* as painful, the death of slaves and vile offenders; and to adde to the disgrace, they crucifie him between two Thieves.

Yea, even when he was bleeding upon the Cross they would not forbear to deride and revile him, expressing their scorn both in words and gestures. Nor were they that did thus, the οἱ πολλοὶ, the rude rabble onely, but the chief Priests, Scribes and Elders.

Now consider this, O Christian, how it fared with Christ thy great Lord and Master, what affronts, what dishonours and reproaches he endured, and how unconcernedly and undisturbedly he bare them, how

how he *deſpiſed the ſhame*, how little he cared either for the applauſe or contempt of the world, how he choſe rather to be reputed and dealt with as the moſt abject and baſeſt of men, than to be glorious in the world, and to ſhine in its vain honours: And will not this prevail with thee to ſet thy ſelf againſt thy *Pride* and *Self-eſteem?* Surely it is not poſſible that thou, who art infinitely beneath thy bleſſed Saviour, ſhouldeſt ſet a high value on thy ſelf, and affect the praiſes of men, or be greatly concerned at the contemptuous behaviour and affronts of the world, when thou ſeriouſly conſidereſt how Chriſt was uſed, reproached, contemned and deſpiſed, and with what calmneſs and ſedateneſs of ſpirit he bore it. *The diſciple is not above his maſter, nor the ſervant above his Lord*, Matth. x. 24. *It is enough for the diſciple that he be as his maſter, and the ſervant as his Lord*, ver. 25.

2. *As for that luſt of Self-pleaſing, the love of eaſe and pleaſure, an averſeneſs to endure hardſhips, a ſtudious care to gratifie the cravings of our fleſhly appetites*, is there not enough in the conſideration of Chriſt crucified to cure alſo *this* diſtemper of the Soul?

Soul? Did not Christ out of dear compassion towards men leave his Fathers house, where was all fulness and all joy, and humbled himself to become man, and *took upon him the form of a servant?* He endured cold and heat, hunger and thirst, wearisome labours, long fastings, and faintness, *he bare our griefs, and carried our sorrows*, and (as hath been shewn) endured inexpressibly worse griefs and sorrows than any of *ours*.

Now how can we consider this, and be any longer dearly affected to our Carkasses, sollicitous for the pleasing of our appetites, and pampering our Bodies, curious about Meats and Drinks, and studious for that which is most delicious and grateful to the flesh? And as for the *impure* pleasures of the world, no consideration can be more powerful to extinguish in us all desires to them, than that of * Christ upon the Cross.

* *Cum me pulsat turpis aliqua cogitatio, recurro ad vulnera Christi, & sanabor.*

3. Re-

3. *Revenge and Hatred:* Who can harbour these Lusts in his Soul that considers that Christ laid down his life for his enemies? And that almost the last words he spake on the Cross, amidst that shame and torment they put him to, were a prayer for them: *Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do*, Luke xxiii. 34.

4. *Covetousness, or the Love of Money:* Who that considers, that *though Christ was rich, yet he became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich*; and that it was this lust that betrayed the Lord of Life to his mercileſs enemies, can find it difficult to mortifie and subdue his inclinations to it?

To conclude this: To the serious Christian *the word of the Cross of Christ* is sharper than any two-edged sword, to the destroying all our evil and corrupt affections.

But I fear that it is not considered, as it ought, by most of us. Christians generally consider the Sufferings of Christ onely

onely as they were designed to expiate sin, and in reference to what he hath done for them without them, not to the extirpation of sin, not to *the crucifying the flesh with the affections and lusts:* And hence it is that their consideration thereof is no more available to this great end.

CHAP. XV.

That the frequent consideration of the great Recompence of Reward is a mighty help to the attaining of Self-Resignation.

XV. TEnthly and lastly: In order to the attaining of *Self-Resignation*, let us look to the great recompence of Reward. Let us with an eye of faith frequently look upon the promise of eternal life, *the prize that is set before us, the Crown of Life and Glory, that fadeth not away, reserved in Heaven* for all obedient and *resigned* Souls.

It is said of *Jesus*, Heb. xii. 2. that *for the joy that was set before him, he endured the Cross*, (as exquisitely painful as it was) and *despised the shame*; all the mockings and insultings of his enemies over him, and the vile ignominy and infamy of his Death.

And

And in conformity to him a Christian may be enabled to endure the inward Cross, in being crucified to the world, in dying to sin and his own corrupt will, by eying stedfastly the joy and glory set before him, by often contemplating the future Reward, which is infinitely above all the labours that accompany *Self-Resignation*, and the pains and sorrows that do attend it.

The Great Apostle of the Gentiles, who was acquainted not onely with the greatest sufferings from the world, and the labours and pains of Mortification and Self-denial, but also with this blessed Reward, (having been rapt up into Paradise, where he saw and heard unutterable things) he (I say) having well weighed both, doth thus pronounce, Rom. viii. 18. *I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared* (bear no proportion) *with the glory that shall be revealed in us.* If the sufferings be laid in one ballance, and the glorious Reward in the other, the Glory will unspeakably outweigh them: For it is *a far more exceeding and eternal weight of Glory*; in comparison of which our heaviest afflictions are

but *light*, and our longeſt *but for a moment*.

That God is a *Rewarder of them that di-*
2 Cor. iv. 17. *ligently ſeek him*, is the firſt principle to be believed in Religion, without which all our motions and endeavours therein will be weak and feeble. And the *End* of our Faith & Obedience being much in our eye, the excellency and infinite deſireableneſs thereof will ſweeten all that ſowrneſs, and take away all that unpleaſantneſs which may be in the *means*.

A firm Belief and frequent fixed thoughts on the heavenly Reward would fill our hearts with joy and ſtrength, and carry us with great eaſe through whatſoever difficulties lye before us in the way of entire Obedience and *Self-Reſignation*. None of the Divine Commandments can can be grievous to the heavenly minded, no trials over-burdenſome.

The ſerious believing thoughts of the glory to be enjoyed will put ſuch life, ſpirit and vigour into us, as will cauſe us to *run the race ſet before us*, not onely with *patience*, but with delight and joyfulneſs:

So

So that *we shall sing in the ways of the Lord*, as the expression is *Psal.* cxxxviii. 5. *and glorifie him even in the fires*, Esay. xxiv. 15. We shall be enabled to submit to God's Will under great afflictions, as without murmuring, so with thankfulness.

They that grudge to give God more than the fruit of their lips, than some good words, wishes, or intentions, or some formal ceremonious observances, or some reformation in lesser and easier matters, and think they have done as became those that sought God's Kingdom, surely these have a very mean esteem of, and miserably undervalue the glory and felicities of the life to come. They never spent so many thoughts on Heaven as to have any true and worthy conception of the happiness of it; otherwise they could never imagine the doing and suffering no more than this comes to, to be fit to be recompenced with such a Reward: or that God will ever reward such a shadow of Religion, with so real and substantial a Happiness, their withering leaves of outward profession, with such a Crown of Glory as shall never fade. But those that frequently affect their Souls with the thoughts of that bliss which is

promiſed in the Goſpel to thoſe *who deny themſelves*, and *take up their Croſs and follow Chriſt* in ſpiritual Obedience and *Reſignation*, can never think much of any pains or trouble this may put them to. If the Devil can prevail and perſwade as he doth by thoſe aiery and imaginary ſatisfactions he promiſeth, what influence would God's promiſes of *fulneſs of joy*, and *pleaſures for evermore*, and *an everlaſting Kingdom*, have upon all thoſe that duly conſider them?

How will men deny themſelves, what labours will they undergo, what hardſhips will they ſuffer for ſome worldly advantages which fall far ſhort of a Kingdom? for ſome petty principality and dominion over others, for a preferment that hath ſome little authority in it, or brings in ſome profit? But had any ſuch ambitious ones hopes of a Kingdom, how would they be tranſported with all exceſſes of joy, what difficulties, dangers and painful labours would they go through and think them nothing? And can we grudge to do or ſuffer as much, if it were neceſſary, for an infinitely more glorious Kingdom than any in this world, if we really believed it attainable by us? If

If we were promiſed a great earthly reward upon condition we would abſtain from ſuch and ſuch things as are very pleaſing and grateful to us, would we not do it? And ſhall not the eternal bleſſedneſs which God, who is as faithful as able to perform, hath promiſed, be of like power and force with us? Nay, ſhall it not be of far greater force proportionable to the quality of the Reward? When all that we can do is but very little and utterly unworthy to be compared with this glorious Reward, is it poſſible we ſhould do leſs than we can, for the obtaining of it, if we conſideratively and believingly thought of it?

Know ye not (ſaith the Apoſtle) *that they which run in a race, run all, but one receiveth the prize? ſo run that ye may obtain. And every man that ſtriveth for the maſtery, is temperate in all things: Now they do it to obtain a corruptible Crown, but we an incorruptible*, 1 Cor. ix. 24, 25. If they in the *Iſthmian* Games were ſo careful to obſerve an accurate diet for the preparing and enabling them to thoſe exerciſes; if they were temperate and continent in all things,

denying themſelves in their ſenſitive deſires; if they were willing to weary and ſpend themſelves in the race, to endure blows and wounds in their combat; and thought no diligence, no labour, no pains nor hazards too great for but a flowery or leafy, a fading and corruptible Crown, a ſhort and periſhing Reward; would not Chriſtians much more *run their race with patience, fight the good fight of faith, endure hardſhip*, deny themſelves and their fleſhly deſires, while an *exceeding and eternal weight of Glory* is in their eye? If the men of this world ſhall think no pains too great for uncertain riches, and which, while they enjoy them, are imbittered with many fears and anxious cares; would not the lively hope of eternal life, and a treaſure in Heaven, which neither *the moth can eat*, nor *ruſt corrupt*, nor *thieves ſteal*, ingage us to greater labours and ſelf-denials? Would it not more enraviſh our hearts, more ſtrongly affect us, and make us more intent, earneſt and induſtrious? Surely it would.

Awake, awake then, O thou delicate and lazy Chriſtian! rouſe up thy ſelf, and ſtir up the gift of God in thee: Go up to *Mount Nebo*, and take a fair view of *Canaan*,

naan, that pleaſant and glorious Land: See what a goodly Heritage is reſerved for theee, and *how great that goodneſs is which God hath laid* (or * *ſtor'd*) *up for them that fear him* Eye the fulneſs of the Reward: Keep it in thy mind, believe it with thine heart, and then how chearfully wilt thou travel through the Wilderneſs to *Canaan* before thee. Yea, this will make the very Wilderneſs a little *Canaan*, or Land of reſt and delight to thee; it will make it a little *Eden*, and *Garden of the Lord.* Nor wilt thou then grudge at it, if God ſhall prove and humble thee by a long journey in the Wilderneſs, *to know what is in thine heart*, (as it is ſaid of *Iſrael* in the figure and letter) whether there be in thee an obedient will, a reſigned, patient, ſubmiſſive temper as to his commands and diſpoſals. Thou wilt not be difficultly perſwaded to believe that *Canaan* will make an abundant recompence for all thy travels and weariſome labours. And if in the mean while God feeds thee with the *bread of heaven*, ſuſtains thee with *Manna* in the Wilderneſs, art thou not well dealt with and kindly treated by him? Hereafter to feed with Angels, to ſit down with *Abraham*, *Iſaac* and *Jacob* in the Kingdom

* צָפַן Pſalm xxxi. 19.

Deut. viii.

of Heaven, and here to be provided for with *Angels food* (as *Manna* is called) to the full: To have *joy unſpeakable and glorious*, an eternity of pleaſures hereafter, and with all *peace which paſſeth all underſtanding* here; inward pleaſures and delicious ſatisfactions from reflexions upon the doing of thy duty; *the peaceable fruit of righteouſneſs*, which *thy ſowing to the Spirit* will yield thee, in this life: To be crowned with Glory in Heaven, and on Earth *to be crowned with loving kindneſs and tender mercies:* Theſe fore-taſtes of happineſs and earneſts of the great Reward, theſe *aureolæ*, and little Coronets for the preſent, and the aſſurance of a maſſie Crown, a *weight of glory*, in the other life, methinks ſhould be of force to endear obedience, and greatly to ſweeten patience to thee; to remove all apprehenſion of difficulty and harſhneſs in what God will have thee either do or ſuffer.

If there be any Generoſity in thee, thou canſt not but be very angry with, and condemn, thy ſelf, whenſoever thou feeleſt any ſecret grudging and repining at what God would have thee undertake, ſeeing he hath propoſed ſuch a Reward to animate thee to it.

If

If there were any Ingenuity in thee, thou couldſt not chuſe but bluſh and be aſhamed at that little thou either ſuffereſt or doeſt for the Kingdom of God.

Thy Obedience is due to his Commands, and thy ſubmiſſion, to his wiſe, righteous, and good will, though there were no future Reward for thee: But will God beſtow on thy *Obedience* and thy *Patience* (the two parts of *Self-Reſignation*) ſo glorious a reward? Will he reward an obedience for a ſhort time, and that far ſhort of perfection too, and a momentary ſuffering of affliction, with an eternity of bliſs, with a glory ſo tranſcendently and aſtoniſhingly great?

And is this great Reward ſo near? this preſent life is but ſhort, thou haſt but a few days to continue here, there is but a ſtep between thee and eternal life: There is between this and the other world the Vale of the ſhadow of death, a darkſome paſſage, but a very ſhort one, and thou ſhalt enter upon poſſeſſing *the reward of the inheritance*; which at the glorious appearance of Jeſus Chriſt ſhall be grown up to its full proportion.

Canſt

Canſt thou ſeriouſly conſider theſe things, and think any thing too dear and precious, which God would have thee part with, and deny thy ſelf in; or call any thing grievous, which he either commands or tries thy *Reſignation* to his Will by?

The End.

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